

HISTORY OF EUROPE

FROM THE

FALL OF NAPOLEON

IN MDCCCXV

TO THE

ACCESSION OF LOUIS NAPOLEON

IN MDCCLII

BY

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HISTORY OF EUROPE.

CHAPTER XLII.

DOMESTIC HISTORY OF ENGLAND, FROM THE RETURN OF THE WHIGS TO POWER IN APRIL 1835 TO THE ACCESSION OF QUEEN VICTORIA IN JUNE 1837.

1. LORD MELBOURNE, on 18th April, in informing the House of Lords that he was again at the head of the Government, dwelt much on the difficulties he had had to contend with in forming his Administration, which he described as having been "peculiarly great and arduous, and some of them of a severe and mortifying nature." He declared that he meant to proceed on the same principles on which the former Government was based, and they were "the principles of a safe, prudent, and truly efficient reformation—principles the tendency of which was not to subvert or endanger, but, on the contrary, to improve, strengthen, and establish the institutions of the country. And in regard to ecclesiastical government, every measure contemplated in reference to that subject would have for its end the increase of true piety and religion through the whole of his Majesty's dominions. I do not know whether I shall have the assistance of Mr O'Connell or not, but I can state most positively that I have taken no steps to secure it; I have entered into no terms whatever, nor said anything from which an inference can be drawn to secure that individual's support. As to tithes, I do not hesitate to say that I consider myself as

pledged to act on the resolution of the other House."

2. Nothing could be more temperate and judicious than this language; but in the divided state of the country on most subjects, it was no easy matter to carry them into execution; for what would conciliate one section of the supporters of the Ministry, would alienate another. The extremely small majority also, not exceeding ten or twelve, which alone the Ministry could command on any vital question, rendered it impossible to introduce any ulterior measures of organic change, which were loudly demanded by the extreme Liberal party. In the circumstances, much came to depend on the personal character of the Prime Minister; and without a thorough appreciation of it, the annals of his administration will be very imperfectly understood. Fortunately a portrait of him has been drawn by one who knew him well, both in public and private, and whose likeness, though characterised by the humorous style of the author, cannot be suspected of undue prejudice, as it is from the hand of a zealous Whig partisan. "Viscount Melbourne," says Sydney Smith, "declared himself quite satisfied with the Church as it stood; but

if the public had any desire to alter it, they might do so if they pleased. He might have said the same thing of the monarchy or of any of our other institutions, and there is in the declaration a permissiveness and good-humour which in public men has seldom been exceeded. Carelessness, however, is but a poor imitation of genius; and the formation of a wise and well-reflected plan of reform conduces more to the lasting fame of a Minister than the affected contempt of duty which every man sees to be mere vanity, and a vanity of no very high description. Everything about him seems to betoken careless desolation; every one would suppose, from his manner, that he was playing at chuck-farthing with human happiness, that he would giggle away the great Charter, and decide by the method of tee-totum whether my lords the bishops should retain their seats in the House of Lords. All this is the mere vanity of surprising, and making us believe he can play with kingdoms as other men can with nine-pins. I cannot, however, allow to this Minister the merit of indifference to his actions; I believe him to be conscientiously alive to the good or the evil he is doing, and that his caution has more than once arrested the gigantic projects of the Lysurgus* of the Lower House. I am sorry to be obliged to brush away the magnificent fabric of levity and gaiety he has reared; but while I accuse our Minister of honesty and diligence, I deny that he is careless or rash; he is nothing more than a man of good understanding and good principles, disguised in the eternal and somewhat wearisome affectation of a political *roué*." Probably the leading features in this graphic sketch are correctly drawn. But there can be no doubt that the humorous dean's turn for epigrammatic saying has led him to overlook much that was estimable in Lord Melbourne's character. He had a large fund of sterling good sense, and much prudence in the management of public affairs; and his conversational talents

* Lord John Russell.

and polished manners rendered him an agreeable minister for his youthful sovereign, while his strong sense of female propriety rendered him a safe and valuable adviser.

3. When the elections consequent on the seats that had been vacated by the new appointments came to take place, Ministers received several defeats, which demonstrated the precarious ground on which they stood. Mr Littleton, member for Staffordshire, having been elevated to the peerage by the title of Lord Hatherton in order to enable him to sit in that house as one of the Commissioners of the Great Seal, a vacancy occurred in that county, and a Conservative was returned. Mr Charles Grant having also been made a peer by the title of Lord Glenelg, a vacancy occurred in the county of Inverness, which he had represented, and it immediately returned a Conservative candidate. Lord John Russell himself was defeated in Devonshire by Mr Parker, a Conservative, by a majority of 627. Thus the majority of seven, which carried the amendment to the Address, was reduced to ONE; each of the three votes changed counting two on a division. Such was the real majority with which the Whigs resumed power; but a similar majority had done great things in former days; it had introduced the Reform Bill in England, and ushered in the Revolution of France. In the present instance, however, the Administration was in much safer hands, and having tasted somewhat of revolution, the country was less likely to promote it. The only effect of this close division of parties in the House of Commons, was to augment the dependence of Ministers on the Catholic members of Ireland,—a state of things ruinous to that country, and ere long attended by the most disastrous consequences.

4. Although the new Ministers, while in opposition, had made it a serious ground of complaint against Sir R. Peel that he would obstruct the progress of useful reform, yet it soon appeared that they themselves had even less important changes to introduce

than he had contemplated. Commutations of tithes, the conversion of church-rates, and ecclesiastical reform in England, all of which the late Minister had contemplated, were laid aside, and Lord John Russell announced that the only two remedial measures which Government were prepared to introduce this session, were CORPORATION REFORM, and a Bill regarding Irish tithes, to be founded on the late resolution of the Commons. Nothing was said concerning the Dissenters, in whose favour Sir R. Peel had prepared a measure. This gave rise to great dissatisfaction at the time; but the new Administration were wise in their limitation of reform at present to their two measures, for, they were quite enough to be matured in one session; and Lord John Russell justly remarked, that the experience of the last three years proved that nothing was so prejudicial to the progress of real reform as introducing too great a multiplicity of measures at one time.

5. The administration of the English corporations had long been complained of, and unquestionably they exhibited many abuses, and in many instances loudly called for amendment. A corporate reform had already been introduced into Scotland based on the principle of parliamentary reform, and which settled the whole matter by the simple rule that the parliamentary electors of every burgh were to be the municipal also; that the larger burghs should be divided into wards, each of which should send two representatives to the town-council, to be elected by the qualified electors within their respective bounds; and that the provost and bailies, corresponding to the English lord mayor and aldermen, should be chosen by the councillors, and be invested with the whole powers of magistrates within the bounds of the burgh. These functionaries were to be elected for three years, and one-third of the council were to go out every year to make way for successors similarly elected. Certain corporate bodies, as the Merchants' House, Trades' House, &c., were to send representatives of their own to the coun-

cil, but the great majority were elected by the parliamentary electors, and they were invested with the entire right of administration of the corporate property and patronage of every description. The experience of the working of this change has as yet been too short to admit of any safe conclusion being drawn as to its ultimate effects; but hitherto, at least, it has not promised much in the shape of real amendment. The old close system has been effectually abolished, and the political influence of the town-councils, which was always considerable, often great, has been entirely thrown into the Liberal scale; but beyond this no material change for the better has taken place in the administration of the burgh affairs. The debates at the council-boards of the great towns have been too often scenes of vain display or unseemly contention; the ambition of newly acquired power has evinced all the restlessness and grasping disposition which so often accompanies it; many old abuses have stopped, but many new ones have been introduced. It was soon discovered that the vesting power in several thousand electors did not terminate the sway of cliques, but only caused them to be composed of different persons; and such were the sums often wasted in unprofitable litigation and legislation, that men came to regret the good old times when a small part of the amount had been squandered on the comparatively cheap and innocuous system of eating and drinking.*

6. The English Municipal Reform Bill was gone about with more caution, but the Government were not the less determined to carry it through. The Whigs had long been jealous of the English corporations, many of which had come, in process of time, to be

* It is a remarkable fact, that since the introduction of municipal reform two-thirds of the burghs of Scotland have become bankrupt, or preserved their solvency only by severe local taxation. This has arisen, not from culpable squandering or making away with the corporate property, but from rash attempts at legislation, and crude and unprofitable attempts at social improvement or philanthropic objects.

little more than the private property of a few individuals veiled under the name of corporate estates, and all of which they regarded, often with reason, as the strongholds of Toryism and corruption, utterly inconsistent with the popular principles introduced by the Reform Bill. A commission had, with a view to a change, been issued by Earl Grey's Administration, and they presented, in the end of May, a report which strongly condemned the existing system of corporate government.* Although this report was much complained of as having been in a great measure founded on evidence taken *ex parte*, and from witnesses exclusively summoned on one side (the usual case with commissions issued by Government for party purposes), yet there can be no doubt it was in the main founded in truth. At any rate, the old system of the close management of corporations was evidently utterly inconsistent with the new and popular regime under the Reform Bill, and the Ministry had felt too strongly the effect of the defection of a number of boroughs in the late elections, not to be aware that it had become a question of life and death to

* "In conclusion, we report to your Majesty that there prevails amongst the inhabitants of the great majority of the incorporated towns a general, and, in our opinion, a just dissatisfaction with these municipal institutions, a distrust of the self-elected municipal councils, whose powers are subject to no popular control, and whose acts and proceedings, being secret, are unchecked by the influence of general opinion; a distrust of the municipal magistracy, tainting with suspicion the local administration of justice, and often accompanied with a distrust of the persons by whom the law is administered; a discontent under the burdens of local taxation, while revenues that ought to be applied for the public advantage are diverted from their legitimate use, and are sometimes wastefully bestowed for the benefit of individuals, sometimes squandered for purposes injurious to the morals and character of the people. We therefore feel it to be our duty to represent to your Majesty that the existing municipal corporations of England and Wales neither possess nor deserve the confidence of your Majesty's subjects, and that a thorough reform must be effected before they can become, what we humbly submit to your Majesty they ought to be, useful and efficient instruments of local government." One of the commissioners gave in objections to this report, and another dissented from it entirely. — *Ann. Reg.* 1835, pp. 241, 242.

them to prevent such a pernicious example from spreading any farther.

7. Founded on the report of the commissioners, the Government, on the 5th June, brought forward the ministerial plan of corporate reform. It was very sweeping—more so in some respects than the Scotch Municipal Bill had been. The number of boroughs embraced in the bill was 178, London being excepted, for what reason does not very distinctly appear, unless it was that Ministers were afraid of endangering their small majority if they interfered with the numerous vested interests wound up with its incorporations. Of the 178 boroughs 93 were parliamentary, and their boundaries remained fixed as they had been by the Reform Bill; the boundaries of the remaining 85 stood as they had been before until Parliament should direct an alteration. Each borough was divided into wards, varying in number according to its size: Liverpool was divided into sixteen, others into ten or twelve. The government of boroughs was vested in a mayor and town-council; but they were to be elected by all persons rated to the support of the poor in them for the three preceding years, and residing within the boroughs, or within a circuit of seven miles around. The mayor was to be elected annually for one year only, he being, during his mayoralty, a justice of peace for the borough and adjoining county. The councillors were to be elected for three years, one-third going out annually to make way for others similarly elected. All the old modes of acquiring the freedom of corporations, as by birth, apprenticeship, &c., were to be abolished, as also all exclusive rights of trade or carrying on handicrafts within their limits. The town-councils were to become, by the statute, trustees of all the corporate and charitable funds administered by the old corporations, with power to appoint committees for their management, and to choose persons, being burgesses, for their directors. The police was to be entirely under the direction of the town-councils, but not the licensing of public-houses, which

was to be intrusted to the justices. With respect to the administration of justice, to 129 of the boroughs a commission of the peace was to be granted, and the town-councils in them were to be empowered to recommend the persons to be put into the commission of the peace. The remaining fifty-four might have a commission on applying for it from the Crown. In the larger towns applying for quarter sessions the chairman was to be a barrister of not less than five years' standing, appointed by the Crown.

8. Apart from the technical details essential to give a legal view of this most important bill, the leading features of it, in a political and general point of view, were these: 1. The choice of town-councils and magistrates was intrusted to a new electoral body, created for that special purpose, of all persons rated for the relief of the poor, which was equivalent to household suffrage; 2. The qualification was *uniform*, and there was no representation of classes, as guilds or incorporated trades; 3. The old freemen were disfranchised, and all acquisitions of the municipal suffrage or rights of freemen by any other means than being rated for the poor-rates, were for the future abolished, though the rights of existing freemen were saved; 4. Publicity was enjoined upon the administration of all trusts and corporate funds, which were entirely devolved with the general management of the boroughs; but—5. There was no money or other qualification for councillors; and—6. The administration of justice was still reserved to the Crown, which appointed the recorders and justices by whom it was to be carried on, the town-councils being only entitled to recommend persons for these offices.

9. In support of this bill it was argued by Lord John Russell, Lord Melbourne, and Mr Hobhouse: "The plan of municipal government proposed by Ministers is intended to provide for 183 corporations, to which the bill is to extend, including a population of at least two millions. Many of these corporations govern large and

important towns, of which they did not properly represent the property, intelligence, and population. In Bedford the corporate body was only one-seventieth of the population, and one-fortieth of the property of the town. In Oxford there were 1400 electors, many of whom did not reside in the town, and seldom more than 500 voted at an election. In Norwich there were 3225 resident freemen, of whom 1123 were not rated at all, and of these 315 were paupers. Out of £25,541 annual rental no less than £18,224 belonged to persons noway connected with the corporation. At Cambridge, out of a population of 20,000, of whom 1434 were £10 householders, there were only 118 freemen, and of the annual rental of £25,490 only £2110 was the property of freemen belonging to the corporation. These were only examples of the strange anomalies which everywhere else prevailed. Corporations so constituted are altogether unfitted for gaining the only object for which they ought to exist, viz., to represent the property of the town in which they are situated, to entertain sympathy with the general feelings of the inhabitants, to take care of their interests, and to afford them that protection which the governing ought to afford to those who were charged with its expenses. On the contrary, they engender a complete separation, a mutual jealousy and distrust, between the governing power and the body of the people. A few persons carrying on the government for their own benefit were connected with a portion of the lower classes, whose votes they purchased, and whose habits they demoralised. The abuses resulting from this were enormous. In the distribution of the charity funds of such places it will in general be found that two-thirds or three-fourths of the whole is distributed among those who belong to the governing body. Part of these funds, intended for the general benefit, are bestowed on a few individuals, part are squandered on feasts and entertainments, part in corrupting and bribing the freemen in

ried by a majority of 28, the numbers being 262 to 234. The English members were in a majority of fifteen against the disfranchisement, and the balance was cast the other way entirely by the Scotch and Irish members. Several other divisions, showing majorities much the same in favour of Ministers, took place on other clauses in the bill; and at length it was passed as originally proposed on the 17th July. But its fate was very different in the House of Lords. It was first resolved in that assembly to hear counsel in support of several petitions which were presented against the bill, a resolution ominous of the fate which awaited the measure there. Counsel were heard, and evidence led against the bill, as infringing on the vested rights of freemen. It was strongly contended against the bill, that by it 83 corporations, many of which had existed for centuries, would be destroyed, the law of election for the officers to govern them completely altered, and the reappointment of others vested in a democracy which was to succeed to their vacated seats. The lower, the less educated classes of the community would thus become invested with all the rights and powers which now belong to the entire community. All the charity funds and estates of corporations would be taken out of the hands to which they had been intrusted by the donors, and vested in new ones of whom they never heard, and to whom they would never have intrusted them. A more complete and wholesale spoliation never was attempted in any nation. On a division, Ministers, on an amendment moved by Lord Lyndhurst to omit the clause disfranchising the freemen, were left in a minority of 93, the numbers being 130 to 37! Lord Lyndhurst immediately followed up this victory by a motion which had been rejected by the Commons, to preserve to freemen their parliamentary franchise as secured to them by the Reform Bill, which was carried without a division, that on the preceding motion having determined its fate. Government,

however, made a determined resistance to the next amendment, moved by Lord Lyndhurst, which was to the effect, that instead of the council being chosen from the whole ratepayers, as the bill at present stood, they should be divided into six classes, and the council should only be eligible from the highest class. It was carried against them, however, by a majority of 81, the numbers being 120 to 39. Another modification, that the councillors in the larger boroughs should have a personal estate worth £1000, and in the smaller of £500, was introduced on the motion of Lord Devon. A further amendment was carried by a majority of eighty-seven, to the effect that a fourth of the council and the town-clerks should hold their offices for life. These amendments, with the exception of that which declared the town-clerks and a fourth of the council elected for life, which was changed into six years, were adopted by the Commons on the motion of Lord John Russell, not without the strongest expressions of disapprobation by the Radical members; and the bill, as thus amended, finally passed on 7th September, and received the royal assent.

16. The Municipal Corporation Bill was the greatest organic change introduced since the passing of the Reform Act, and in some respects it was little inferior in importance to that celebrated measure. It is memorable also as exhibiting the immense effect already produced by Sir R. Peel's dissolution, and the restoration of the real working of the constitution by the House of Lords being replaced in its functions as an independent deliberative branch of the Legislature. By the amendment introduced by the Peers, which preserved the municipal and parliamentary rights of the freemen, it was stripped of its worst revolutionary features; and it undoubtedly remedied many indefensible abuses which had crept in, in the course of ages, under the old close system. The old freemen were by no means a creditable class of voters, and being the lowest class of the community,

they were most accessible to open corruption; but still it would have been a dangerous precedent to have disfranchised the whole for the faults of some; for as no class is immaculate, there is no saying how far this precedent might have been carried. But the great principle of the bill, that of declaring the councils eligible by the *whole ratepayers told by head*, as well as the freemen, remained unchanged, and, for good or for evil, worked out its appropriate results. What those fruits are have been now ascertained by Experience, and were even at the time anticipated by Reason, however little its still small voice had a chance of being heard amidst the din of the first great constitutional struggle which had arisen since the passing of the Reform Bill.

17. The great fault of the Municipal Reform Bill was not what it destroyed, but what it created; yet so strangely ignorant were the Conservative leaders of the real tendency of the changes introduced in this respect, that the subject was scarcely mooted, and never dwelt upon, in either House of Parliament. The old corporations had very generally abused their trusts, and introduced for their own benefit many corruptions, and therefore it was quite right to dispossess them of their management; and Lord John Russell said with truth, that the only way to introduce a better system of administration was to let in a fair proportion of the "property, intelligence, and population of the borough." This being the principle on which the bill professed to be based, how was it carried out? Why, by admitting the *whole ratepayers*, in one undistinguished mass, to choose the councillors in whom the entire government of the borough was vested. Of these ratepayers, at least three-fourths of course occupied houses rated at or below £10; that being, at the very least, the proportion of the working to all other classes of society. This, then, was the class in whom the Municipal Reform Bill placed the entire government of boroughs and corporations in England and Wales—in a huge mass

of persons inhabiting houses rented at from £5 to £10 a-year. It was a mockery to speak of property or intelligence being represented, when they were outvoted four to one by publicans and workmen. It is the more extraordinary that Government should have committed the enormous mistake of establishing the constituency on this basis, that they were so much alive to the abuses of the franchise by the freemen, that they themselves had proposed to disfranchise them all both of municipal and political rights. But their idea seems to have been, "seeing that a portion of the lowest class of freemen have introduced abuses, and proved unworthy of trust, therefore we shall succeed in remedying them, and establishing a pure administration, by giving the *same class* the entire control of the corporations." The common argument that the multitude will govern well because it is for their interest to be well governed, is utterly fallacious. That holds good only so long as they are the governed; when they become the governors, the desire is overcome by a much stronger one, viz., to benefit themselves by governing others ill.

18. The only way in which it is possible to introduce good government on the representative principle, either as regards municipalities or nations, is to have the representation based, *not on numbers, but on classes*. This may be effected either by arranging the whole citizens in classes, according to the amount which they annually contribute in the shape of taxes or personal service to the state, or in guilds or corporations, according to their different trades or avocations; and having the ruling body chosen, not by a simple majority of numbers told by head of the whole, but by the different classes or trades thus separately arranged. The working classes should by no means be excluded, but they should not be allowed to form the majority, and consequently rule the whole. The first principle was adopted in ancient Rome, where the citizens were arranged in thirty centuries, according to their contributions to the

public service, and the government officers were chosen by the votes, not of the citizens, but the centuries: the last is the principle on which the representative system, both in parliaments and municipalities, has been generally established in modern Europe. Wherever the representative system has acted well and lasted long, it has been rested on one or other basis; the long duration and immense prosperity induced by the old English constitution, was owing to the same system having, amidst many imperfections, by indirect means, and through the intervention of the close boroughs, been practically put in operation in these islands. Based on this principle of the representation of classes, the system affords the best security for good government which the wit of man has ever yet devised, because it brings the great interests of society to bear directly on the administration of affairs, and affords a constant check upon their mismanagement. Based on the opposite principle of the representation of mere numbers, it becomes the greatest curse which can afflict society, and must speedily work out its own destruction; because it subjects the community to the irresponsible government of the most numerous, but at the same time the most dangerous, most uninformed, and most corruptible portion of its members.*

* This is exactly Mr Burke's view of the question. "There is," says he, "no argument for supposing *the multitude, told by head, to be the people*. Such a multitude can have no sort of title to alter the seat of power in society, in which it over ought to be the obedient, and not the ruling power. What power may belong to the whole mass, in which mass the natural aristocracy, or what by convention is appointed to represent and strengthen it, acts in its proper place, with its proper weight, and without being subjected to violence, is a deeper question. To enable men to act with the weight and character of a people, and to answer the ends for which they are incorporated into that capacity, we must suppose them to be in that state of habitual social discipline, in which the wiser, the more expert, and the more opulent, conduct, and, by conducting, enlighten and protect the weaker, the less knowing, and the less provided with the goods of fortune. When the multitude are not under this discipline, they can scarce be said to be in civil society. Give once a certain constitution,

19. While these important discussions were going on regarding municipal reform, Government introduced a bill for the regulation of the Irish Church, embodying, of course, the appropriation principle, which had been recognised by the House on the late memorable debate, and occasioned the fall of the late Administration. It consisted of two parts,—one for the collection and reduction of tithes, and the other for the creation of a surplus, and its appropriation to the moral and religious instruction of the whole community, without any distinction of religious creed. The bill passed a second reading without a division, Sir R. Peel reserving to himself to move an instruction to the committee regarding the appropriation clause. This he accordingly did, by moving in Committee that the bill should be divided into two parts—one containing the remedial, the other the appropriation clause. This was objected to by Ministers, on the ground that it was only a device to enable the House of Lords to pass the one bill and throw out the other, which it certainly was. On a division, Ministers had a majority of 37—the numbers being 319 to 282. This majority, like all those at this period, was secured entirely through the Irish and Scotch members; of the English members, a majority of 8 were in favour of the motion, but no less than 63 Irish were against, and only 34 for it. This division was decisive of the fate of the bill in the Lower House; and to render it more palatable to the Upper, Ministers proposed an annual grant of £50,000 a-year from the Consolidated Fund, to form the basis of a fund, to which the church property appropriated to educational purposes was to be added. This step, however, failed in disarming the opposition of the Conservative peers, who, considering this question

which produces a variety of conditions and circumstances in a state, and there is in natural reason a principle which, for their own benefit, postpones not the interest, but the judgment of those who are *numero priores* to those who are *virtute et honore majores*."—"Appeal from the Old to the New Whigs;" *Works*, vi. 216, 228.

as involving an important public principle, threw out the appropriation clause by a majority of 97—the numbers being 138 to 41. This defeat so disconcerted Ministers that they abandoned the measure in the Lower House, and it was accordingly dropped for the present. At the same time, a bill was hastily brought in and passed, authorising Government to suspend proceedings against the clergy for recovery of the £1,000,000 which had been advanced to them during the worst periods of the combination against tithes; a humane and praiseworthy step, for if recovery of the sum had been attempted, as it must have been, under the Acts authorising the advance, the Irish clergy would have been involved in total ruin.*

20. While measures of party politics were thus fiercely debated, and attended by those narrow divisions in the House of Commons, those which, without benefiting either side in the House, went only to relieve the distresses or stimulate the industry of the country, were thrown out by large majorities. A motion by Mr Cayley, the able and patriotic member for the North Riding of Yorkshire, to appoint a select committee to inquire if there be not effectual means within the reach

of Parliament to afford substantial relief to the agriculture of the United Kingdom, and specially to recommend to the committee the subject of a silver standard, or a conjoined silver and gold one, was rejected, after a three nights' debate, by a majority of 216 to 126, being very nearly the proportion of the borough to the county members. A motion of Lord Chandos for an address to his Majesty, representing the general agricultural distress which prevailed, with a view to the immediate removal of some part of those burdens to which the land is peculiarly subject through the pressure of general and local taxation, met with no better fate: it was lost by a majority of 211 to 150. The alliance of Government with the Roman Catholic members for Ireland, and their entire dependence on them for a parliamentary majority, obliged them to yield to a motion of Mr Finn for a committee to inquire into the Orange lodges of that country; a system of mutual defence for the protection of the Protestants, often scattered in small numbers through multitudes of hostile Ribbonmen and Catholics. It led, however, to no other result than that it revealed the existence of Orange lodges in thirty-four regiments of the army, a practice

* Sir R. Peel, in the course of the debate on this question, gave the following account of the real clear revenues of the Irish Church, which had been so often represented as the richest in the world, and enjoying an income of £3,000,000:—

Tithes composition,	£507,367
Glebes,	76,700
Gross income,	£584,067
Deduct three-tenths,	£152,700
Average,	57,632
Woods and Forests,	8,872
	<u>219,204</u>
Clear income,	£364,863
Parishes,	2505
Having fifty Protestants and upwards,	1121
Having below fifty,	860
Benefices,	1385
Average income of incumbents of benefices,	£188

The Report of the Commissioners of Public Instruction in the same year, enumerated the inhabitants according to their creeds thus:—

Established Church,	853,064
Presbyterians,	642,358
Other Dissenters,	21,808
Total Protestants,	1,517,228
Roman Catholics,	6,427,712

—Ann. Reg. 1835, pp. 290, 296.

which was justly denounced as dangerous to the discipline and subordination of an armed force. An attempt to implicate the Duke of Cumberland, the grand-master of the institution, in a participation with these military lodges, though very anxiously pressed, proved unsuccessful. There could be no doubt, however, that the existence of Orange societies in the army was a serious evil, and fraught with danger under any circumstances; and the House of Commons having, in the next session of Parliament, passed a resolution praying the King to take such measures as would be effectual for the suppression of such societies, the Duke of Cumberland wisely dissolved all the Orange societies in Ireland. The Ribbon societies, however, were not dissolved, and devastation, murder, and outrage continued for long afterwards to be organised by them, which afterwards led to a partial revival on a smaller scale of the Orange lodges as an indispensable measure of defence.

21. Although the House of Commons, by a great majority, had refused to listen to the tale of agricultural distress, or inquire into the currency laws as affecting the general industry of the empire, yet it was easier to stifle inquiry than to prevent the effect of the laws; and when the Chancellor of the Exchequer came to bring forward the budget, he had a very different account to give of the state of the finances from that which had been anticipated in the preceding year. He calculated the income of the country at £45,550,000, and the expenditure at £44,715,000. But this surplus, even if it should arise, disappeared before the interest of the loan for the negro emancipation indemnity, which amounted to £1,000,000 in all for this year, leaving not only no surplus, but a probable deficiency of £170,000. Thus, in addition to the many disastrous effects of the emancipation of the negroes in the colonies themselves, there is to be set down to the charge of that measure the termination of the surplus, and commencement of the dispute between the rural and urban interests, which

thereafter went on continually increasing till it worked out a total change in the financial and commercial systems of the country.

22. The manly and independent stand which the House of Peers had made against the revolutionary projects which had been forced upon the Ministry by their adherents among the English boroughs and the Irish Catholics, while it greatly raised them in the estimation of all thinking men, apart from the whirl of party ambition, excited the utmost indignation among the Radicals over the whole empire, not less impatient than any Eastern sultan of any restraint upon their wishes. Mr O'Connell took the lead in the agitation got up to inflame this feeling, and he made a progress, after the rising of Parliament, through all the great towns of the north of England and Scotland to excite the people on the subject. His language and designs may be judged of by the speech which he addressed to a very large assemblage of the working classes at Manchester. "If there were only one house of parliament, a majority of that house, perhaps a faction, would become the rulers of the entire nation. I am therefore for two houses, but they must be two honest houses. What title have the Lords to legislate for us? They have two, the present law and the constitution. But they have been changed, and *why should they not be changed again?* What are the Lords? Hereditary legislators! Because the father was supposed to be a good legislator, the son is supposed to be so equally. Why, if a man applied to you to make a coat, your question would be, Are you a tailor? —No, I am not, but my father was a tailor. Is there a single man among you who would employ a hereditary tailor of this kind? That principle of common sense will go abroad among the Lords. Whether hereditary legislators or tailors, we'll have none of the botchers at all. Who is sending this principle abroad? The Lords themselves, because they are showing themselves the arrantest botchers that ever spoiled a job of work. They shall

never get a receipt till they have paid the last farthing. If they delay, they may have to pay a little interest upon it. The question is, whether you are to have 170 masters or not,—170 irresponsible masters, the people looking for redress of their grievances, and looking for it in vain. Will you endure that any gang or banditti, I care not by what name you call them, should treat them and you contemptuously? In one word, I call them rogues. *We must put down the House of Lords.* Ye are miserable minions of power. Ye have no choice for yourselves till that house be thoroughly reformed. Let the King retain his prerogative of raising men to that rank and station in which they may be eligible. Let every 200,000 men in Great Britain and Ireland select one Lord from this list; that will give you 130 for the 24,000,000: let them be re-eligible every five years, and you will have a steady Chamber."

23. These extreme opinions were at this time by no means confined to the arch-agitator, his obsequious Irish followers, or the noisy multitudes whom he addressed in England and Scotland; they were shared also by a large proportion, certainly a great majority, of the working classes in all the great towns, upon whom the doctrine had long been sedulously inculcated that the House of Peers was a body of interested aristocrats, destitute of public spirit, incapable of improvement, whose sole function was to obstruct, for their own selfish purposes, every plan of social or political amelioration.* Nor was the legislature itself by any means free from such doctrines.

* "While we strongly deprecate the unmanly and submissive manner in which the Ministry and the Commons have, bare-headed, bowed to the refractory Lords, we are proud to observe that the King, at the prorogation of Parliament, acknowledged the advantage of responsible governments. His Majesty, in his speech, acknowledged that peace and union can alone be secured where the people and his Ministers have bound themselves to establish responsibility in every department of the State; and as the Lords have hitherto displayed a most astonishing anomaly in this enlightened age by retaining the right to legislate by birth or court favour, and being thereby rendered irresponsible, it fol-

On the contrary, Mr Roebuck, on 2d September, announced his intention, early in the following session, of introducing a bill taking away from the House of Lords their constitutional veto upon all measures of legislation, and substituting for it a suspensive power, so that when a bill passed the Commons, and was rejected by the Lords, if it should again pass in the same session of Parliament, and receive the royal assent, it should become the law of the land. Mr Rippon, member for Gateshead, gave notice of a motion to remove the bishops and archbishops from the Upper House; and Mr Hume, of a motion to inquire into the number and privileges of the House of Lords, with a view to render them responsible like the Commons. Finally, Mr O'Connell, after his crusading progress against the House of Peers, was invited to the Lord-Lieutenant's table in Dublin, and received there! These ominous manifestations excited so strong a feeling of dissatisfaction among the Conservative portion of the electoral body in Great Britain, that in two elections which took place at this time, one for Devizes and the other for the county of Northampton, the ministerial candidate in both cases was defeated, though, in the latter instance, he was Lord Milton, eldest son of Earl Fitzwilliam.

24. These repeated defeats, especially in the county elections, excited great apprehensions in the ministerial ranks, who with reason dreaded a destruction in a few years of their trifling majority in the House of Commons, while they knew, by dear-bought experience, that an overwhelming ma-

jority would be cut down as a rotten encumbrance, or be so cured as to be made of some service to the State as well as amenable to the people. It follows that the Commons also must be rendered still more responsible to the nation at large by the further extension of the suffrage, and by abridging the term of Parliament, ere the hands of the King and his Ministers can be so strengthened as to perform effectually the good work of necessary instruction and salutary reform." —Address of the Non-franchised Inhabitants of Glasgow to Mr O'Connell, "the first Man of the Age, the champion of civil and religious liberty all over the world," Oct. 17, 1835; *Ann. Reg.* 1835, 360, 370.

majority in the House of Peers was decidedly hostile. These alarms were forcibly expressed by Sir W. Molesworth, the able member for East Cornwall, who was closely connected with the *Westminster Review*, and spoke the language of that section of politicians in seconding a motion of Mr Grote in favour of the ballot, on 2d June. The opinions then expressed were the more worthy of notice, that both these gentlemen were very able men,—the one destined to be a cabinet minister, the other the learned and celebrated historian of Greece. “Ministers,” said Sir W. Molesworth, “ought now to be aware of the mortifying fact, that amongst the gentry of England their party is decidedly in a minority; that the great majority of the aristocracy, of the landed gentry, and all the clergy to a man, are their determined and irreconcilable foes, who would spare no efforts, who would use every species of undue influence and intimidation, to compass their destruction. If they leave their supporters exposed to the tender mercies of the Tory party, they will by degrees be ejected, like Lord John Russell, from the representation of all the counties in England. Do they remember that their friends have been ejected, and replaced by their enemies, in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Denbighshire, Derbyshire, Devonshire South, Essex South, Gloucestershire West, Hampshire South, Lancashire South, Leicestershire South, Lincolnshire, Norfolk East, Northamptonshire South, Shropshire North, Suffolk East, Suffolk West, Surrey East, Surrey West, Warwickshire South; and that within these few weeks they have again been dismissed from Devonshire, Invernesshire, and Staffordshire? Do they remember their fatal losses in the counties in the late election? Do they prefer to be utterly annihilated as a party in the House, rather than have the ballot? If so, their fate is nigh at hand, and they will well merit it.” To the same purpose Mr C. Buller, member for Liskeard, and a leading Whig, said that, “feeling as the

Liberal party did, that the majority of those enjoying wealth, property, and influence was against them, it was essential that they should endeavour to excite a fervid feeling in the breasts of the multitude, and therefore it was that they were obliged to resort to popular agitation to counterbalance the force that was marshalled against them.” In like manner, in an article which bore internal evidence of Lord Brougham’s composition, it was asserted in the *Edinburgh Review*, that the great majority of persons having above £500 a-year were against the Liberal party—a enormous commentary on the preamble of the Reform Bill, that it was intended to extend the franchise to a fair proportion of the property and intelligence of the country.

25. Government, however, did not share the apprehensions of their extreme Liberal followers as to the disappearance of their majority in the House of Commons. They knew too well the decided preponderance of the borough members in that House, aided by the Liberals of Scotland and the Catholics of Ireland, to have any serious fears of defeat in the Lower House. But the recent great majorities against them in the House of Lords rendered it painfully evident that they stood on the most precarious footing in that assembly; and that any casual discomfiture in the Commons would be followed in all probability by a vote, in the Lords, of no confidence, and their entire ejection from office. Their situation also was one of extreme difficulty, exposed as they were to constant pressure from without, and demands for further organic change from their Radical and Catholic supporters, essential to their majority in Parliament, which were at least as distasteful to the old Whig families as they were to the most inveterate Tory in the kingdom. In addition to this, recent events had brought the two Houses of Parliament into open collision, and the cry for peerage reform was becoming as general among the Catholics and Radicals as ever that for parliamentary reform

had been. In these circumstances the danger was imminent, that Government would be brought to a deadlock, and fresh convulsions arise from the obstacles thrown in the way of further changes by a fixed majority, independent of popular control, in the Upper House. Pressed on all sides with these difficulties, Lord Melbourne judged—and judged, as matters stood, wisely—that it was indispensable to bring the House of Lords more into harmony with the majority in the House of Commons; and this he proposed to accomplish, not, as in 1832, by marching sixty or eighty new peers at once into the House of Lords, but by the successive creation of single peers or small batches, in a way not likely to excite attention, but quite as effectual in the end, and at no remote period, in changing the ruling majority in the Upper House. So steadily has this system been pursued by successive Liberal Administrations, that since 1830 upwards of a hundred new peers, almost all of them of Liberal politics, have been added to the House of Lords; and by this means not only has the Tory majority, created by the long tenure of office by the Conservatives before that time, been effectually overcome, but the balance rather east the other way. To this cause the subsequent smooth working of the constitution, and the successful passage of Free Trade and other Liberal measures through the House of Lords, is mainly to be ascribed.*

* PEERS CREATED SINCE 1830, AND PROMOTIONS SINCE THAT TIME.

By Whigs.

At King William's Coronation in 1831,—

Dukes,	2
Marquesses,	3
Earls,	5
Barons,	20

Subsequently created in his reign, 22

Since then,—

Earl of Leicester,	1
Duke of Roxburgh,	1
Lord de Mauley,	1
Lord Sudley,	1
Lord Wrottesley,	1
Lord Methuen,	1
Lord Lismore,	1
Lord Kintore,	1

Carry forward, 60

26. The attention of the empire was anxiously turned this year to the West Indies, as the effects of the new apprenticeship system, which came into operation in the preceding year, were now for the first time to be brought

● Brought forward,	60
Lord Carew,	1
Lord Lovelace,	1
Lord Zetland,	1
Marquess of Normanby,	1
Lord Vaux of Harroden,	1
Lord Beauvale,	1
Lord Furnival,	1
Lord Stanley of Alderley,	1
Lord Stuart de Decies,	1
Lord Wenlock,	1
Lord Lurgan,	1
Lord de Freyne,	1
Lord Leigh,	1
Lord Colborne,	1
Lord Ponsonby,	1
Lord Dunfermline,	1
Lord Camoys,	1
Lord Montegle,	1
Lord Auckland,	1
Lord Keane,	1
Lord Tralaw,	1
Lord Beaumont,	1
Lord Hastings,	1
Lord Stair,	1
Lord Kenmare,	1
Lord Campbell,	1
Lord Vivian,	1
Lord Congleton,	1
Duke of Norfolk, and eldest son,	1
Earl of Gosford, do.,	1
Lord Barham,	1
Lord Segrave,	1
Lord Sydenham,	1
Lord Dalhousie,	1
Lord Strafford,	1
Lord Cottenham,	1
Lord Gough,	1
Lord Dartrey,	1
Lord Milford,	1
Lord Elgin,	1
Lord Clandeboye,	1
Lord Edderbury,	1
Lord Londesborough,	1
Lord Overstone,	1
Lord Truro,	1
Lord Cranworth,	1
Lord Broughton,	1
Lord Aveland,	1
Lord Wensleydale,	1
Lord Amesbury,	1
Lord Belper,	1
Lord Lyons,	1
Lord Metcalfe,	1
Lord Macaulay,	1
Lord Seaton,	1

115

Of these, three—viz., Lords Cottenham, Truro, and Cranworth—were Lord Chancellors, and Lord Dunfermline, a retired Speaker, who were made peers as a matter of course. And Lords Vaux of Harroden,

to light. The results were anything but favourable. The season had been uncommonly favourable, and the crop abundant; notwithstanding which, there was a falling-off of 4444 hogsheads, or about a sixteenth, from the quantity shipped in the preceding year. The produce shipped was 68,000 hogshoads, instead of 72,444. The Jamaica House of Assembly said, in their Address to the Governor on the meeting of their provincial parliament: "It would be a great comfort to us were we able to discover any possible hope that succeeding crops will improve, our decided conviction being that each succeeding crop will be progressively worse. That in some few cases the apprentices do work for wages is true; but we deeply regret to say that, from our personal experience of the past year, the opposite disposition so immeasurably preponderates that no confidence whatever can be placed in voluntary labour. We deeply regret our inability to join in the favourable anticipations entertained by your excellency of the suc-

Beaumont, Camoys, and Hastings claimed and established their right to dormant peerages. For none of these were the Whig Ministers responsible. From these 115 creations, therefore, must be deducted 8, leaving 107 in twenty-five years, for which they are responsible. This is exclusive of five promotions—viz., Duncie, Durham, Effingham, Granville, and Yarborough—conferred during the same period by them.

By Tories.

Earl of Lowther,	1
Earl of Derby,	1
Lord Hull,	1
Lord Ellesmere,	1
Lord Gough,	1
Lord Ellenborough,	1
Lord Hardinge,	1
Lord St Leonards,	1
Lord Raglan,	1
Lord Stratford de Redcliffe,	1

—
10

It is but justice to the Whigs to say, that the Tories had set them the example, for they had avenged themselves for their long exclusion from office, for seventy years before 1784, by a liberal creation of peers since that time, and down to 1830. At the accession of George III. the Peers were only 180, and at the arrival of Mr Pitt to power in 1784 they were 220; and on the return of the Whigs to power in 1830 they were about 410, exclusive of the elected peers of Scotland and Ireland.—BURKE'S *Peerage*.

cess of the new system. But knowing, as we do, the prevailing reluctance evinced by the people to labour, the thefts, negligences, and outrages of every description that are becoming of such frequent occurrence; seeing large portions of our neglected cane-fields overrun with weeds, and a still larger part of our pasture-lands returning to a state of nature; seeing, in fact, desolation already overspreading the very face of the land,—it is impossible for us, without abandoning the evidence of our own senses, to entertain favourable anticipations, or to divest ourselves of the painful conviction that the progressive and rapid deterioration of property will continue to keep pace with the apprenticeship, and that the termination of it must, unless strong preventive measures are applied, complete the ruin of the colony." So distasteful was this address to the governor, that he said, on receiving it, that its style precluded him from making any other reply but acknowledging its receipt.

27. This year witnessed the commencement of those unbappy troubles in Canada, which two years after rose to so formidable a height, and materially impeded, though happily only for a short time, the progress of that noble colony. The time at which they arose, the inhabitants among whom they were chiefly prevalent, and the objects to which the demands of the malcontents were directed, leave no room for doubt that they were prompted by that combination of Romish ambition with democratic encroachment, which at that period so violently shook the mother country, and from which the leaders of the combined parties anticipated a speedy and entire change both in Church and State. The lower province had for some time been in a state of great ill-humour, chiefly in consequence of the efforts of the Catholic priests in it, where the persons of their persuasion were five-sixths of the people, to excite disaffection against their Protestant governors. Such was the irritation which prevailed, that it was only increased by the dissolution which took place in

August 1834; and the Cabinet, conceiving that the dissatisfaction was in part at least owing to personal dislike at the governor, recalled Lord Aylmer, the governor of the province, and Lord Amhorst was nominated by Sir R. Peel as his successor. In the mean time, such was the discontent which prevailed at Government refusing to agree to a bill for rendering the upper house (or Legislative Council) elective, according to O'Connell's demands in Great Britain, that the House of Assembly of Lower Canada *refused to vote the supplies*; the salaries of all the public servants ceased to be paid; and the governor, under the direction of Mr Spring Rice, advanced £31,000 from the military chest to meet the most pressing demands. The Assembly, however, were by no means so niggardly to themselves as they were to the public servants of the state, for one of their first acts was to vote £18,000 for payment of their own salaries and current expenses. This vote the governor required time to consider; and as the opposition upon this withdrew, the Assembly was adjourned upon the ground that a quorum did not remain to carry on the public business.

28. With a view of appeasing the colony, which had now, both in the upper and lower province, become extremely discontented, Lord Melbourne, soon after his restoration to power, sent out Lord Gosford as governor, with a board of commissioners, of whom he was chairman, to inquire into the grievances which were complained of. It was soon discovered that the grounds of complaint were of an entirely different character in the lower and the upper province. The preference shown to the English language over the French, and to the British settlers over the French, with the accumulation of offices in the persons of the former, the interference of government in elections, and the undue delay in sanctioning or considering bills, formed the chief grounds of complaint in the former province; and they were urged almost entirely by persons speaking the French language, and of French

descent. They insisted also, that the Upper Assembly, or Legislative Council, corresponding to the House of Peers, instead of being, as heretofore, appointed by the Crown, should be elective. The demands of the upper province were different, and were directed chiefly to obtaining a control of the public moneys and accounts; and the discontented in it were for the most part found among the numerous new settlers who had come out during the general fervour originating in the reform movement. Thus it was easy to see that different agencies were at work in the two provinces, and the discontent originated in the want of different things. The influence of Rome was exerted in the lower province to add to the difficulties of the English Government, and aid O'Connell's agitation and crusade against the House of Lords in the British Islands; and accordingly it was directed to rendering the Upper Assembly elective, and obtaining the admission of Catholics into offices of trust and power under the government. The influence of the reform passion was felt in the upper province, and, in consequence, the demands of the leaders of its agitation were chiefly directed to the old Anglo-Saxon object of getting the control of the supplies.

29. To appease these discontents by conceding such of them as appeared to be reasonable, and suited to the growing strength and intelligence of the colony, Lord Gosford stated in his speech to the Assembly of Lower Canada, on its opening in November 1835, that he was authorised to sanction the grants voted in the last session for their own expenses, and which Lord Aylmer had reserved for consideration; and he made at the same time the important announcement: "I have received the commands of our most gracious Sovereign to acquaint you that his Majesty is disposed to place under the control of the representatives of the people all public moneys payable to his Majesty or to his officers in this province, whether arising from taxes or from any other source. The ac-

counts, which will be submitted to your examination, show the large arrears due as salaries to public officers, and for the other ordinary expenditure of the government, and I earnestly request of you to pass such votes as may effect the liquidation of these arrears, and provide for the maintenance of the public servants pending the inquiry by the commissioners." This great concession, however, was far from satisfying the demands of the Canadian reformers, directed as they now were by foreign and sacerdotal influence. They said, accordingly, in reply: "The great body of the people of this province, without distinction, consider the extension of the elective principle, and its application to the constitution of the Legislative Council in particular, the repeal of the acts passed in Great Britain on matters concerning the internal government of the province, as fully within the jurisdiction of the provincial parliament, as well as the privileges conferred by such acts, and the full and unrestrained enjoyment, on the part of the legislature and of this house, of their legislative and constitutional rights, as being essential to the prosperity and welfare of his Majesty's faithful subjects in Canada, as being necessary to insure their future confidence in his government, and their future welfare and contentment under it, and to remove the causes which have been obstacles to it." They received with pleasure the grant of a control over the public accounts, but avoided any promise to repay the £31,000 advanced from the military chest. This state of things did not augur much harmony in their future deliberations between the Government and the Assembly, and this soon appeared. One of their first acts was to insert in the public accounts the agent's bill for Mr Roebuck's salary, the parliamentary agent for the Assembly in the House of Commons; and the governor's council having declined to sanction this charge, the Assembly passed it at their own hauds without the intervention of the Government. Thus ill-humour and hasty

proceedings prevailed on both sides, and it was easy to see that matters were fast hastening to that point when concession on the part of Government would inflame rather than allay the public discontents, and that a violent collision was unavoidable.

30. The general prosperity of the manufacturing and commercial interest, contrasted with the deep depression of the agricultural which had distinguished the two preceding years, continued through the whole of 1835 and 1836, and formed the subject of marked allusions in the Speech from the Throne, when Parliament opened on the 14th February in the following year. The King said, in his speech on that occasion, with truth and discrimination: "The state of the commerce and manufactures of the United Kingdom is highly satisfactory. I lament that any class of my subjects should still suffer distress; and the difficulties which continue to be felt in important branches of agriculture may deserve your inquiry, with a view of ascertaining whether there are any measures which Parliament can advantageously adopt for the alleviation of their pressure."

31. The precarious condition of Ministers, depending for their majority in the House of Commons entirely upon the support of the Irish Catholics and English Dissenters, stamped, as a matter of necessity, a peculiar character upon their legislative measures, which were entirely directed to relieve the grievances or gratify the wishes of those parties. The first field which presented itself, and which was recommended for consideration in the Speech from the Throne, was the state of the Irish corporations. These establishments, in addition to the numerous abuses which had been so much complained of in the English boroughs, and which had led to the Municipal Bill of the preceding year, were affected also by a great variety of evils which were peculiarly their own. Thus their reform was calculated at once to remedy more serious corruptions, and introduce more extensive changes in the balance of political parties, than

that of the English boroughs had done. These corporations had been established chiefly by James I., as so many legislative outposts to secure the English command of the country. As a necessary consequence, they were all Protestant, and Catholics were excluded from them without exception. In a word, they had been planted in the Irish wilderness, like blockhouses in the forests of the Far West, to form so many rallying-points to the Protestant settlers in the island, and they were in general surrounded by a vast majority of Catholics. In these circumstances, the extension of municipal institutions, similar to those established in Great Britain, to Ireland, was not merely a social but a political question. It was mixed up in fearful proportions with religious dissension, and tended to convert the fortresses erected for the defence of one faith into the strongholds from which it was to be assailed by another. Nevertheless, the thing required to be attempted, for after popular government of boroughs had been established in Great Britain, it was impossible to refuse it to the sister island; and if such a refusal had been attempted, it would only have added another to the many real and supposed grievances of the Emerald Isle.

32. The first step of Government on this question was to issue a commission to inquire into the condition of the Irish boroughs, as they had done in regard to those in England. This commission, as might have been anticipated, reported strongly against the Irish corporations, even more so than had been done against the English.*

* "That the incorporations provided no means, and contained no constituency by which the property, the wishes, and the interests of the whole local community might secure a fair representation in the corporate body; that in many towns there was no recognised commonalty; that in others where it existed it was entirely disproportioned to the inhabitants, and consisted of a very small portion, of an exclusive character, not comprising the mercantile interests, nor representing the wealth, intelligence, or respectability of the town. The corporations, and not without reason, were looked on by the great body of the inhabitants with suspicion and distrust, as having interests dis-

There could be no doubt that though such commissions in general proceed on *ex parte* evidence, and studiously avoid summoning any one who is likely to thwart their preconceived opinions or secret instructions, yet in this instance their report was in the main well founded. Proceeding on it, Mr O'Loughlan, the Irish Attorney-General, introduced a bill for the better regulation of Irish corporations. He stated, that though a great many corporations had perished since the Union, there were still sixty in full vigour, and eleven in a state of decay. These seventy-one corporations included within their territories 900,000 persons, while the number of corporators was only 13,000. Of these 13,000 no less than 8000 were to be found in four of the larger boroughs, leaving only 5000 corporators for the remaining sixty-seven corporations, containing above 500,000 inhabitants. The paucity of these corporators was not redeemed by their character. Since 1792, the corporations had been nominally open to Roman Catholics, but not more than 200 had been admitted. In Dublin they proceeded on the avowed principle of excluding

tinct from and adverse to those of the general community, whom they thus studiously excluded from any participation in the municipal government. Their members frequently consisted of the relations and adherents of particular families or individuals, and the principles of their association, and those which regulated admission and exclusion, had rarely any connection with the common benefit of the district, or the wishes of the inhabitants. In by far the greater number of the close corporations, the persons composing them were merely the nominees of the patron or proprietor of the borough; while in those which apparently were more enlarged, they were admitted and associated in support of some political interest, most frequently at variance with the majority of the inhabitants. The corporations have long been unpopular, and objects of suspicion. As at present constituted, they are in many instances of no service to the community, in others injurious, in all insufficient and inadequate for the proper purposes and ends of such institutions. The public distrust in them attaches to their officers and nominees, and the result is a failure of respect for, and confidence in, the ministers of justice and police."—*Report of Irish Corporation Commissioners*, Nov. 4, 1835; *Ann. Reg.* 1836, 20, 21.

not only all Roman Catholics, but the great majority of Protestants, of wealth, respectability, or intelligence. The sheriffs of that city were chosen by the corporate body, and they always put persons connected with the incorporation first upon the list, and it was so managed that the Catholics were always in a minority. In a word, the management of corporations, and the administration of justice in their hands, was nothing but a tissue of injustice, partisanship, and corruption.

33. "The remedy proposed for these evils is to put corporations under effective popular control, as has already been done in England and Scotland. In seven of the larger boroughs, comprising Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Kilkenny, Belfast, Galway, Waterford, it is proposed to make the municipal coextensive with the parliamentary occupants, and to include every £10 occupant. This rule, however, if applied to the smaller boroughs, would give much too small a constituency. In these boroughs it has already been provided, by an Act passed in 1828, that all householders inhabiting £5 houses and upwards shall have a vote for paving and lighting commissioners; and it is proposed to apply in them the same principle to the municipal franchise. In the larger boroughs there will be a division into wards. The aldermen are to be elected, not by the councillors, but the inhabitants, and to consist of those who at the poll have the greatest number of votes; one half of the councillors and aldermen to go out of office every three years. A commission of the peace to be issued to any borough, if the Lord-Lieutenant saw cause; in the other towns, the mayor for the time being to be the magistrate of the borough. In the seven larger boroughs, the council to elect sheriffs, subject to the approval of the Lord-Lieutenant; the management and control of the whole corporate funds and patronage to be vested in the town-council. There is only one way in which it is possible to pacify Ireland, and that is to promote a real union through an amelioration of her institutions, by

treating her fairly, by giving her equal privileges and equal rights with England. Deny her that, and the Union is at an end."

34. On the other hand, it was argued by Sir R. Peel, Lord Lyndhurst, and Lord Stanley: "The greater part of the corporations in Ireland, between forty and fifty in number, have been erected by James I., avowedly as guardians of the Protestant interests, and to favour the spread of the Protestant religion. This bill, whatever may be said to the contrary, and under whatever colours it may be veiled, goes to annihilate the ancient corporation system of Ireland, and vest the management of the boroughs and their extra property in different hands, and persons actuated, both in civil and religious concerns, by entirely opposite interests and wishes. By this bill there will be no more connection between the former and the new corporations, than between the old and the new departmental system in France. It may be necessary to make such a change, but it is in vain to deny that it amounts to complete revolution, so far as both property and influence are concerned, in the whole boroughs of Ireland. It is not denied that the present system has become a cover for many abuses, and has, by the lapse of time, become unsuitable to the circumstances of society; and it may at once be conceded that it would be unwise to attempt to maintain it any longer.

35. "What system, then, should be proposed in its place? for some system there must be, and everything depends on the principles on which it is to be founded. The plan now proposed, after destroying the whole existing corporations in Ireland, proposes to erect them anew in fifty-four towns in Ireland, in forty-seven of which the council are to be chosen by a household suffrage of £5. With regard to population, the bill descends very low; for in the town of Middleton, with 2037 inhabitants, and Belurbet, with 2067, there are to be four aldermen and twelve councillors; and the bill also gives power to the Lord-Lieutenant to apply it to any town in

that country, without reference to the amount of its population. This power might be exercised on a petition of two or three discontented inhabitants. The report of the commissioners bore that there were 126 towns in Ireland, with a population of 2000 each. It might be presumed that they would all be erected into boroughs, and this might even be done with a hundred villages more, with a population of 1000 souls, on the application of two or three ambitious persons desirous of obtaining situations of power or emolument in them. These little boroughs would all have the power of making rules and by-laws at variance with each other; and the station of the persons by whom these Liliputian legislatures are to be elected, may be judged of by the admission in the bill, that recourse must be had to the £5 occupants to make up the municipal constituency.

36. "Serious as these evils are, they are as nothing compared to those which are connected with the administration of justice. In every corporate town there is to be a mayor, who is to be *ex officio* a justice of the peace, owing his power, not to commission from the Lord-Lieutenant, but to the simple election of the householders. This is not the case in England, where the corporate magistrates, as such, have no judicial power; and it is not a little remarkable, that while the report of the commissioners states it as one of the evils of the corporate system in Ireland that the borough magistrates are independent of all control from the Crown, this bill proposes to perpetuate that very evil. Will these evils be remedied by giving to popular bodies the election of these justices? will not, on the contrary, their election, from which such important consequences are to flow, be the occasion of fresh discord and animosity? First, there will be the registration of the voters, then the election of the town-councillors, and then the election of the mayor, aldermen, and town-clerks! What a scene must such a state of things present! How truly has it been said, it will render these little boroughs normal schools of agitation.

It is said the sheriff, under the old system, showed undue preference to the corporators, and put them first on the panel of jurors: will the new sheriff, acting under the pressure from without, be more scrupulous, or less partial to those who have elected him? What possible objection can there be to giving the appointment of these sheriffs to the Lord-Lieutenant? He is to have, under a bill pending in Parliament, the appointment of the police force in every county and town in Ireland, on the preamble that such unity of government is essential to its due action. On what principle is the police of 126 towns to be taken out of his hands, and vested in those of the £5 householders?

37. "Then, as to the corporate property, it is very considerable, and has apparently been well managed, for its income in all the boroughs is £61,397, its expenditure £57,279, and the debt charged on it only £133,000. These revenues are derived from two sources, lands and tolls. These are to be vested absolutely in the new corporations, subject only to the restriction of not lowering the tolls when they are pledged for debt. That is impolitic; for the true way to increase these towns is not to authorise them to borrow money on the tolls and spend it on corporation purposes, but to induce them to lower or take off the tolls altogether, and thereby attract trade to their markets. In short, the proposed bill goes to eradicate one set of evils only to rear up another set of the same description still more formidable, and the last state of matters will be worse than the first. The true way to legislate, in order to remove the admitted evils of the present system, is not to create a new system, creative, in the end, of the same or greater evils, merely because a similar system has been established, but to consider by which system equal laws and equal privileges may best be secured to all. Is this to be done by merely rendering the party hitherto servient the dominant power? What does it signify by whom undue influence is exercised—whether by landlord or priest? Mr

O'Connell has said, and said truly, that every one knows that corporate reform will render the English boroughs 'normal schools of agitation.' Will they prove less so in Ireland? We call upon you, therefore, knowing that these annual elections will engender strife, and increase the already heated state of party feelings in Ireland, as you value the integrity and security of this great empire, not to lend your sanction to the establishment in Ireland of normal schools, in which the science of agitation is to be taught; and, above all, not to make the graduates in those schools, and the professors of that science, the chosen instruments for leading the civil force, and for dispensing public justice."

38. In accordance with these views, Sir R. Peel did not divide the House upon the second reading of the bill, thereby admitting the principle that the old corporations should be abolished; but in committee Lord Francis Egerton moved, with his concurrence, that "the committee should be empowered to make provision for the abolition of corporations in Ireland, and for such arrangements as should be necessary for their abolition, and for securing the efficient and impartial administration of justice, and the peace and good government of cities and towns in Ireland." The object of this was to vest the government of boroughs, so far as the administration of justice and direction of the police force were concerned, in the Lord-Lieutenant, or those acting under him, not the persons elected by the constituencies. Government resisted this, on the ground that it tended to do away with the principle of popular appointment and control, which was the leading principle of the bill, and establish an invidious distinction in this respect between Great Britain and Ireland. Lord F. Egerton's motion was lost by a majority of 307 to 64—a larger majority than Lord Melbourne's Ministry had yet got in the Commons; and the bill finally passed by a majority of 61—viz., 260 to 199—with the alteration

only that the sheriffs in the larger boroughs were to be nominated by the Lord-Lieutenant, not the town-councils.

39. The success of the bill was now secured so far as the Commons were concerned; but all parties were aware that it was in the House of Lords that the real trial of strength on it would take place. It was read a second time in the Upper House without opposition; but in going into committee Lord Fitzgerald moved, as had been done in the Commons, for an instruction to the committee similar to Lord F. Egerton's, which had been thrown out in the Lower House. This motion was carried against Ministers by a majority of 84, the numbers being 203 to 119. Several other amendments, bringing the bill into the shape for which Sir R. Peel had contended in the House of Commons, were carried by majorities nearly as large, and the bill, as thus amended, was sent down to the Commons for their consideration. Lord John Russell, after observing that the bill, as now altered, contained little or nothing of what had been sent up from the Commons, seeing that out of 140 clauses 106 had been omitted or altered, and 18 new ones introduced, moved that the amendments of the Lords should be rejected, and the bill sent back to the Upper House. This was carried by a majority of 86, the numbers being 324 to 238. Upon the bill, however, backed by this large majority, coming back to the Lords, the motion of Lord Melbourne, that the amendments of the Commons should be taken into consideration, was lost by a majority of 99, the numbers being 220 to 121; and upon the bill returning, as amended by the Lords, to the Commons, Lord John Russell moved, and carried, that it should be taken into consideration that day three months—the usual mode of abandoning questions which were then set at rest for the present in both houses of Parliament.

40. The other great party-question of the year produced a similar collision, threatening the most serious

consequences between the two houses. The Irish Church Bill was introduced on 25th April by Lord Morpeth, being the same in substance with that which had been thrown out the year before by a majority of 97, in the Upper House; and on this occasion he promised a surplus of £100,000 a-year, as likely to be ultimately available to the purposes of education. Lord Stanley and Sir R. Peel renewed their objections to those clauses in the bill which went to appropriate any part of the church property to temporal or general purposes. The bill on this occasion passed the Commons by a majority of only 26, the numbers being 290 to 264, the minority containing a majority of English members. Upon going to the Upper House, however, the appropriation clauses were rejected by a majority of 91, the numbers being 138 to 47, and the bill, as thus amended, was read a third time and passed. Upon the bill returning to the Commons, Lord John Russell started a question of privilege, on the ground of the Lords having incompetently interfered in the first instance with a money bill; and on this technical ground the bill, as amended, was thrown out by a majority of 29, or 260 to 231.

41. Thus were the two houses brought into direct and fearful collision on the two vital questions of Corporate Reform and the Church Establishment in Ireland,—the natural and oft-predicted result of a majority of the Lower House being based on the boroughs, and the representation of numbers, of the Upper on landed estates and the representation of property. It was obvious to all the world that this state of matters was in the highest degree perilous, and could not continue without putting the constitution, as established by the Reform Bill, in serious jeopardy. It went far to neutralise the whole advantage of the representative system, as any question taken up by the opposite sides as a party one was sure to be carried in the one house and thrown out in the other; and this state of antagonism was not

only confirming both in their preconceived opinions, but rendering the division between them, from the keenness of party conflict, every day more decided and irreparable. In the violent shock of the opposite parties which divided the empire, of which Ireland had become the battle-field, the real wants and interests of its unhappy inhabitants were well nigh forgotten; and the fatal illusion became daily more common, that its real evils were political, not social, and were to be removed by a change of ministry or political power, not by an alteration of material circumstances. Meanwhile the open antagonism of the two houses contributed greatly to strengthen the hands of the Radicals, who desired the abolition or entire change of the Upper, and furnished a plausible ground to O'Connell and the revolutionists for representing the House of Peers as the inveterate enemy of all reform, and its establishment on an entirely different footing as an indispensable preliminary to any real social improvement.

42. The event soon showed that the Radicals would not be slow in taking advantage of the door thus opened to them for renewing and inflaming the agitation against the House of Lords. "Justice to Ireland," said O'Connell, "is our cry. England has reformed corporations; Scotland has them: Ireland applied for them; the House of Commons granted them; the House of Lords refused them. It was said, that as soon as the House of Commons was reformed, it would seek a quarrel with the House of Lords; that prophecy has been completely falsified. It is not the Commons who seek a quarrel with the Lords, but the Lords with the Commons. The House of Commons have been forbearing in the highest degree, in order to avoid a collision with the Lords; and the only consequence has been, that they have been defied and insulted. This is not to be endured. We have submitted for centuries to your oppression, but we will not submit to be insulted. We will do nothing violent or illegal; we will keep ourselves within the limits

of the constitution, but we will agitate, agitate, agitate, until Ireland is organised, peaceably and legally, as it was before, and the result will be the same. I trust the people of England will respond to the cry, 'Justice to Ireland!' I defy the House of Lords to keep from Ireland municipal institutions. They may delay—withhold them they never will. I thank them for choosing this as the ground of collision between the two houses; I thank them for branding the people of Ireland as aliens; I thank them for thus barbing with insult their dart of death. The people of England must now join with the majority of the Lords in proclaiming the people of Ireland unfit for municipal institutions, or they must join with the majority of the Commons in forcing them from that obstinate body. Day after day the necessity of *another organic reform* is becoming more evident. The House of Commons has taken its part, the House of Lords has done the same; the collision has come; the people of England will determine between them, and may God defend the right."

43. Upon the English people these violent declamations produced at this time very little impression; for the urban population, in whom such sentiments had formerly found a responsive voice, were so prosperous, from the low price of provisions and flourishing state of commerce, that they were entirely occupied with projects of gain; and the rural, who were suffering from those low prices, were so inherently loyal and peaceable that they could not be brought, from any external pressure, to join their voices to those of the decided enemies of the constitution. But the case was very different in Ireland. There the low price of agricultural produce, which had fallen rapidly from the influence of three fine harvests, acted with unmitigated force on a population wholly agricultural, and possessing no means of either living or paying their rents but by the disposal of the crops of the year. Mr O'Connell took advantage of the universal distress produced by this circumstance to rouse and inflame

the tithe agitation; and he founded on the Whig proposal to deduct 30 per cent from it in a tithe commutation, not as a reason for remaining quiet, but as an additional one for agitating to get quit of the whole remainder. "I will take my instalment," said he in a letter to the electors of Kilkenny, "however small at any time, and *will then go on for the balance*. I realise for Ireland all I can get; and having got part, I am then better able to seek the rest. I heartily supported the Ministry of Lord Melbourne in their measures of tithe relief, not as giving all I wanted for the people of Ireland, but as giving a part, and establishing an appropriation principle which would necessarily produce much more." In pursuance of these principles, the anti-tithe agitation was everywhere renewed, and produced the most lamentable results. Payment of tithe, though only a fraction of a farthing, was everywhere resisted, by the injunctions of the priests, as a matter of conscience. The process-server was everywhere hunted and persecuted like a wild beast. If a sale of distrained cattle was attempted, intimidating mobs, surrounding the scene, prevented any one from purchasing. Some relief was for a time experienced by the clergy from the use of exchequer writs for the recovery of tithe instead of common process; but the respite proved evanescent. The exchequer writs, it was soon found, could be enforced only by the police or military; frequent collisions between them and the peasantry took place, attended by bloodshed on both sides. At Dunkennin in Tipperary two men were slain in October in attempting to post subpoenas in obedience to an exchequer writ; and while the country was agitated by these frightful scenes of disorder and violence, Mr Sheil gave the sanction of his name and abilities to the continuance of the system, and an exchequer collector had to be appointed before a trifling tithe due from his estate could be collected.

44. To carry into full and renewed operation this anti-tithe agitation, the old machinery devised by O'Connell,

which had proved so effective in bringing about Catholic emancipation, was again fully organised and everywhere established. Under his direction and that of Mr Sheil, the old association, under the new name of the "General Association," was re-established in Dublin, and branches set on foot in every town and parish in Ireland. The "General Association" held its meetings weekly, or oftener, in Dublin, at which reports were regularly read from the affiliated associations, or "registry clubs," in the provinces, and the amount of the "rent," or weekly contributions got from them, proclaimed and published. The topics which formed the staple of the speeches at these meetings, were the greatness, strength and determination of Ireland; the seven centuries of English oppression; the necessity of thorough organisation, united action, and incessant agitation; and the magnitude of the results which might be expected from their continued action. The "registry" was especially urged upon their attention, and the necessity of straining every nerve to get Catholic electors on the roll, and keep Protestants off. Corporate reform—in other words, the command of all the boroughs in the kingdom—entire liberation from tithes and church-rates, were the advantages promised in the first instance from these measures; the repeal of the Union and abolition of the Protestant Establishment, the boon to be ultimately extorted from the Government. In this unparalleled and universally organised conspiracy, the leaders were the very men who had recently so furiously denounced the defensive Orange associations in the north of Ireland; and the Government, which remained a passive spectator of it, was the same which had, by means of a mere wish expressed from the Crown to one of the houses of Parliament, scattered all these Orange societies to the winds.

45. But there never was a truer observation than that all human evils have a limit; and that when the effects of existing institutions become excessively injurious, an under-current sets

in, destined in the end to correct them. This limit had now been reached in Ireland; this under-current was beginning to set in. The tide had turned, and though disasters unparalleled yet awaited her, that worst of all social evils, *blindness to the source from which they proceeded*, was beginning to be removed. The wretched condition of the Irish peasantry, under the combined effect of a redundant population, woeful cultivation, an absentee gentry, political agitation, low prices, and no means of emigration, had now reached such a height, that a few men of sense in the country began to see that their evils were *social*, not political, and that instead of being likely to be diminished by the vehement strife of parties, of which they had long been the victims, they were enhanced by it in the highest degree. Add to this that the inundations of Irish labourers into England and Scotland, in consequence of the miserably low wages which they alone could earn in their own country, and the total want of parochial relief there, had at length become so excessive, that the people of England were thoroughly aroused on the subject, and they loudly demanded that a country which enjoyed a rental of £13,000,000 a-year, divided between the landlords and the bondholders, should no longer be permitted to save itself from the burden of maintaining its own poor, by sending them forth in starving multitudes to overwhelm the neighbouring island.

46. So loud had these complaints become, that they had at length come to influence the Legislature; and the committee which sat on the condition of the poor in 1828 had reported that the existing distress among the labouring poor of Great Britain was entirely owing to the influx of Irish poor, and would at once be removed if it could be stopped. Such, however, was the vehemence of party strife, which soon after ensued from the dependence of the Catholic Relief and Reform Bills, that this all-important subject was for a time forgotten, or viewed in an entirely fallacious light. The leaders of the Liberal parties insisted that Pro-

testant ascendancy was the sole cause of the distress, and that Catholic emancipation, municipal reform, and the appropriation of church property, were the suitable remedies. The political economists vociferated that the evils were mainly owing to a redundant population; that the dangerous tendency to increase would only be rendered more formidable by the relief of the suffering with which it was attended, and that the only wise course was to let poverty find its own level, and improvidence in marriage be checked by its attendant and inevitable consequences. Strong as the Liberals and political economists were at this period in the House of Commons, they could not have so long withstood the loud demands of the English people for a participation by Ireland in the burden of maintaining the poor, had they not been powerfully aided by Mr O'Connell, Mr Sheil, and the whole Catholic leaders, who, either dreading a diminution in the revenue of the Catholic Church, from the burden of poor-rates in Ireland, or fearing that the people, if relieved, and suffering less, would become not so susceptible of agitation for the purposes of sacerdotal ambition, cordially united in resisting any legal provision for the Irish poor. Father O'Malley having brought forward a motion in the General Association for a petition to Parliament to establish a poor-law, it was thrown out by Mr O'Connell and Mr Sheil. "Discuss poor-law," said the latter, "at such a moment! Away with such infatuation! The registry, the registry!—think of nothing but the registry."

47. The ruinously low prices of 1835, however, and the unbounded pauperism which was in consequence produced, overcame all these obstacles, and though a majority both of the Cabinet and the House of Commons adhered to their old ideas on the subject, yet they were, in a manner, constrained to yield so far as to issue a commission to inquire into the condition of the poor in Ireland. Fortunately for the cause of humanity, and the ultimate interests of property in Ireland, the gentleman at the head of

it was eminently qualified by his knowledge and abilities, as well as his ample experience of the English poor-laws under the new system, to discern rapidly the real state of the facts. His commission bore date 22d August 1836, and before Parliament rose he had collected such a body of information as was entirely decisive of the question, and threw more light on the subject than all the previous debates in Parliament put together had done. He began his report with these words, the truth of which subsequent events have too fully verified: "Ireland is now suffering under a circle of evils producing and reproducing each other: want of capital produces want of employment; want of employment, turbulence and misery; turbulence and misery, insecurity; insecurity prevents the introduction and accumulation of capital, and so on. Until the circle is broken, the evils must continue, and probably augment. The first thing to be done, is to give security that will produce and invite capital, and capital will give employment. But security of person and property cannot coexist with general destitution; so that, in truth, the drainage, reclamation, and profitable cultivation of bogs and wastes, the establishment of fisheries and manufactures, improvements in agriculture and in the general condition of the country, and, lastly, the elevation of the great mass of the people in the social scale, seem to be more or less contingent upon establishing a legal relief for the destitute."* He further re-

* "Capital has increased in Ireland, but population has increased still more; and therefore the great body of the people remain wretchedly poor notwithstanding the growth of public wealth. The extreme subdivision of land tends to the same result; the soil, fertile as it naturally is, becomes exhausted by incessant cropping. Except in the grazing districts, farms of a hundred acres are almost extinct. There being no legal provision for the destitute, and the subdivision of land into small holdings having destroyed the regular demand for labour, the occupation of a piece of ground is to the peasant the only means of subsistence. Land to them is a necessary of life. A man cannot obtain a livelihood as a day-labourer; he must get a plot of ground on which to raise potatoes, or starve. Mendicancy is almost universal, and has therefore ceased to be disgraceful. It is not disreputable to

ported, that no less than 2,385,000 persons in Ireland are in distress, and require relief at least thirty weeks in the year; that themselves, their wives, and children are absolutely compelled, however reluctant, to beg; and that mendicancy is the sole resource of the aged and impotent classes of the poor generally, whereby encouragement is given to idleness, imposture, and crime. All this obtained in a country where the landed rental was £13,000,000 a-year, being 250 per cent more than that of Scotland! Such was the state of a country, as brought out by their own commissioner, for which Government and its Liberal patriots had hitherto resisted all motions for a poor-rate, and for which they thought the appropriate remedies were, to divert £100,000 a-year from the Church to education purposes, and to give every starving householder paying £5 a municipal vote.

48. No sooner was this report printed, than Mr Scrope, M.P. for Stroud, brought forward a motion founded on it, for immediately coming to a decision on the point of a poor-law in Ireland, with a view to remedying the evils indicated. Government, however, having declared that they had the subject under consideration, and would be prepared

appear wretchedly clothed, or without the decencies of life. Drunkenness is much more common among the Irish than in England. Notwithstanding the evident poverty of the people, the use of whisky and tobacco is excessive, and is said to be increasing. Much of the disorders and violence which prevail may be traced to this source. There is a depression of feeling, morally and personally, among the peasantry; they have no pride in, or desire to better their condition. Their desultory habits are very remarkable. They postpone any business, even the most necessary to the safety of their little crop, to a fair or a market. Their own work is soon done, or they think may be soon done; hence arises a total disregard of the value of time. At present, *the burden of the poor falls entirely upon the poor; the higher classes generally, and the absentees entirely, escape it altogether.* The poor at present are the sole providers for their own necessities each out of his little holding. Hence the agrarian outrages to prevent their being deprived of them; and hence the kind of famine which annually occurs in Ireland, between the going out of the old crop and the coming in of the new."—MR NICHOLL'S *Report*, Nov. 23, 1836; *Ann. Reg.* 1836, pp. 63, 66.

to bring forward a measure next session, the matter was wisely left in their hands. In the mean time, the House of Commons passed several measures of unquestionable utility, and which, not being party questions, were agreed to by the Lords, and have been found by experience to be attended by the most beneficial results. The first of them was a bill for facilitating the commutation of tithes in England, a most important and praiseworthy object, and which goes far to remove those heart-burnings inevitable, where tithe is liable to be drawn in kind in a community much divided in religious persuasion. The machinery by which this was to be effected, was borrowed from Sir R. Peel's bill on the same subject in the preceding year, and it passed without opposition. The second was a bill permitting the celebration of marriages by Dissenters, also taken from Sir R. Peel's bill of the preceding year, and which had met with their entire approbation. This change was highly proper; but the result has proved that, like many other grievances loudly complained of by particular sections of the community, it was practically felt by a very inconsiderable portion of them, for the marriages under the new form authorised by the Act have never exceeded a few hundreds a-year. The third was a bill for the establishment of a general system for the registration of births, deaths, and marriages—a most important object, fraught, as the event has proved, with the most valuable results, and which has gone far to relieve the imputation under which Great Britain has so long laboured, of being behind the Continental nations in statistical information. Still more important to individuals, and the protection of innocence in the administration of justice, was a bill, which at length, by the indefatigable exertions of Mr Ewart, passed both Houses, allowing prisoners, in cases of felony in England, the benefit of counsel to address the jury—though the English system of giving the prosecutor the last word, if evidence was adduced by the prisoner, was still adhered to. This just and humane change, like many

of the other greatest improvements of English legislation during the last half-century, was borrowed from the immemorial practice of Scotland.

49. The extreme depression of the agricultural interest, owing to the unparalleled low prices of the preceding year, compelled Government to give way on the subject; and Lord John Russell, on the 8th February, moved for and obtained a committee to inquire into the matter, on the very reasonable ground that "whenever any great branch of national industry was materially depressed, it was the duty of Parliament to give a favourable consideration to the complaints of those engaged in it, even though there was no reason to think that the distress complained of could be relieved by parliamentary interference." A motion of Mr Attwood, however, for an instruction to the committee to inquire into the currency laws as affecting the interests of agriculture, was so unfavourably received by the House that it was withdrawn without a division. A proposal brought forward by Lord Chandos, on the 27th April, that, in any reduction of taxation which might be practicable, the interests of agriculture should be specially attended to, was lost by a majority of 36, the numbers being 208 to 172. Sir R. Peel and Sir J. Graham both spoke against it, though it was admitted on all sides that the agricultural interest was alone in deep depression, while other interests in the community were in great prosperity, and that out of £8,000,000 taxes remitted during the last five years, £7,500,000 had gone to relieve the manufacturers or general consumers, and only £500,000 bore directly on the agricultural interest. Already it was evident that the balance of the landed and commercial interests had been entirely changed by the Reform Bill; and to the observant eye, these finance measures were fraught with the shadow of mighty changes at no distant period.

50. The general prosperity of the commercial and manufacturing classes, notwithstanding the distress of the

agricultural, however, enabled the Chancellor of the Exchequer to exhibit a more favourable account of the finances in his budget than had been anticipated in the preceding year. He stated the total income of the nation at £46,980,000, while its expenditure was £45,265,807, leaving a surplus of £1,774,193; which, however, would be reduced to £662,000 from the circumstance of £1,111,633 being absorbed by the interest on the West India loan, now become a permanent charge on the nation. The estimates included £434,000 for 5000 seamen additional voted last year; but there was a reduction of £154,000 on the charges for the army. The taxes taken off were very trifling, being chiefly on paper; and newspaper stamps were reduced from 4d. to 1d., which, upon a division, was carried by a majority of 241 to 208 against an amendment, that the surplus of the national income should be applied to a reduction of the duty on soap. If the division last mentioned indicated the ascendancy of the commercial interest over the landed in the House of Commons, it was no less significant of the fact, that the newspaper influence was becoming superior to both. As to the National Debt, for which Parliament had pledged itself in 1819 to keep up a real sinking fund of £5,000,000, it was by common consent ignored, and scarce anything was ever heard on the subject again in Parliament.

51. The grant of five thousand men for the navy, though strenuously objected to by Mr Joseph Hume and the Radicals in Parliament, was amply vindicated by the state of the British naval force, as compared with that of the neighbouring nations. It was stated on 4th March, in moving the naval estimates, by Mr Charles Wood on the part of Government: "From the best information Government could obtain, the French will have twelve sail of the line at sea during the ensuing summer. In 1834 the Russians had five sail of the line cruising in the Black Sea, and eighteen sail of the line, besides frigates, in the Baltic.

Last summer two divisions, of nine sail of the line each, appeared together at a review at Cronstadt; and after landing troops for a review at Kalisch, eleven sail of the line and seven frigates, besides smaller vessels, carrying crews amounting to more than 10,000 men, were cruising in the Baltic. During this same period there never were in our Channel ports *more than two frigates and a sloop, with crews amounting perhaps to 1000 men, disposable for sea at any one time, and that only for a day or two.* At the same time the whole line-of-battle ships this nation had afloat in every part of the world *did not exceed ten.*" Mr Hume contended that "the marine force was *too numerous.*" So much was said about Russia, that gentlemen are afraid of a bugbear of their own creation." Sir R. Peel, however, supported the proposed addition of 5000 men, and it was carried without a division. The land forces voted for the year were 81,319 men, excluding India, of whom more than half were absorbed in the colonies. At this time France had 360,000 regular soldiers in arms, besides three times that number of national guards. Mr Hume, however, moved a reduction of this force by 5000 men. "England," said he "is a civil, not a military country; and I wish to see an end put to that vicious system which has arisen out of our late wars, the maintenance of a preposterously large military force during peace. No real friend of the Government wished them to keep such a force. The Tories might. They were consistent men, attached by system to large establishments and great expense; but no well-wisher to the Government would support them to enlarge the present unnecessary force, or maintain it without diminution. I think that not merely 5000 men, but 15,000 men, may be saved: and as to Ireland, the putting down the Orange lodges will render the presence of the military unnecessary." The reduction was only outvoted by a majority of 136 to 43.

52. While such were the naval and military establishments of the country,

when such formidable forces by sea and land were on foot in the neighbouring kingdoms, it could not be said that it was in ignorance of the state of the case, or for want of being told what danger threatened, and where it was most instant. On 19th February, Lord Dudley Stuart, in a debate on Eastern affairs, said in the House of Commons: "Russia has 50,000,000 subjects in Europe alone, exclusive of Asia, an army of 700,000 men, and a navy of eighty sail of line-of-battle ships and frigates, guided by the energy of a government of unmitigated despotism, at whose absolute and unlimited disposal stand persons and property of every description. These formidable means are constantly applied to purposes of territorial aggrandisement, and every new acquisition becomes the means of gaining others. Who can tell that the Hellespont may not be seized by Russia at any moment? She has a large fleet in the Black Sea, full command of the mouths of the Danube, and of the commercial marine of Odessa and Trebizond; in three days she may be at Constantinople from Sebastopol, and if once there, the Dardanelles will be so fortified by Russian engineers that she never can be expelled except by a general war. She could be in entire possession of these important Straits before any expedition could be sent from this country, even if such a thing could be thought of, against the enormous military force at the command of Russia. That Russia is determined to have the Dardanelles, is evident from the treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi, by which she began by excluding the ships of all other nations. The effect of this treaty was to exclude any ship of war from these Straits, except with the permission of Russia. Russia might at any moment insist on the exclusion of our ships of war from the Dardanelles. Nay, she has already done so; for when Lord Durham, going on his late embassy to the Court of St Petersburg, arrived at the Dardanelles in a frigate, he was obliged to go on board the Pluto, an armed vessel without her guns, before he

could pass the Straits; and when he arrived at Sebastopol no salute was fired, and the excuse given was, that they did not know the *Pluto* from a merchant vessel. But both before and since Lord Durham went, Russian ships of war, with their guns out and their streamers flying, passed through the Black Sea to the Dardanelles, and again through the Dardanelles to the Black Sea. Russia has now fifteen ships of the line and seven frigates in the Black Sea. Sebastopol is only three days' sail from the Hellespont. Turkey has no force capable of resisting such an armament; the forts of the Hellespont are incapable of defence against a land force, for they are open in rear. Russia might any day have 100,000 men in Constantinople, before England or France could even fit out expeditions to defend it." Lord Palmerston did not deny these facts, but resisted the motion for production of the correspondence in regard to the treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi, which was negatived without a division.

53. The discontents of Canada, which had become serious in the preceding year, went on accumulating in this; and arrived at such a point as to threaten an immediate rupture. The demands of the opposite sides remained substantially the same, the colonists insisting for the right of electing the members of the upper house as well as the lower, and the entire control of the moneys levied by Government in the colonies; the Ministers insisting that, as an indispensable preliminary, provision should be made for defraying the expense of the civil government of the colonies, and for repayment of the £30,000 which had been taken from the military chest to meet its most pressing necessities. The consequence of this state of division was, that there was soon open discord between the governors and the two Houses of Assembly, both in the upper and lower province. The Assembly in Upper Canada insisted, in addition to their other demands, upon having the "Executive Council," a sort of cabinet intended to assist the governor in his deliberations, subjected to their con-

trol, and the proceedings made public; a demand which was refused, as unsupported by the constitution of 1791. Upon this the whole council resigned, and a new one was appointed. Instantly the reformers in the province were thrown into the most violent agitation; and the Assembly having become unmanageable, Sir Francis Head, the governor, dissolved it on the 28th May. The event proved that he had not miscalculated the loyal feelings of the province in taking this step; for the returns proved that the tide there at least had turned, and that a decided majority of the people were opposed to the unconstitutional designs of the extreme democratic party. Out of sixty-two members returned, only eighteen belonged to that party, the other forty-four being strongly opposed to any organic change. The result was, that the governor and legislature were then soon in harmony; and that noble colony seemed to be more firmly than ever attached to the British monarchy.

54. The course of events, however, was by no means equally satisfactory in the lower province, for there the great majority of the inhabitants were Roman Catholics, of French descent, and speaking the French language, and their separate nationalities and religious discord came to swell the tide of temporal discontent. In addition to an elective upper house, and entire control over the public accounts, whether voted by themselves in the shape of taxes, or derived from the hereditary revenue of the Crown, they now insisted that the whole waste-lands of the province belonged to themselves in fee-simple, and that a charter, granting a small part of them to a company for the sake of improvement, should be annulled. Government in vain endeavoured to get them to vote any sum for the civil service of the colony, or the payment of the judges and other public servants, now three years in arrear. They voted the payment of their own salaries, and that of Mr Rock, their agent in Parliament, but nothing more; and at length Lord Gosford, finding them utterly untract-

able, was under the necessity of proroguing the house early in March, before which they voted an address, complaining of their grievances, to the Colonial Secretary in England. The Assembly met again in October, and insisted on their former demands, and were even proceeding to frame an act of their own authority, declaring the upper house elective, when their proceedings were stopped by a prorogation on 4th October. It had now become evident that the Canadian malcontents were acting under foreign sacerdotal direction; that their petitions were entirely framed to support O'Connell's demand for an elective House of Peers in Great Britain, and their agitation got up to aid that which he was conducting in Ireland.

55. The extremely small majority of Ministers in the House of Commons, and the large majority against them in the House of Lords, suggested to the leaders on both sides the expedience of endeavouring to strengthen their hands, during the recess of Parliament, by public meetings of their respective friends and partisans throughout the country. A great number of such assemblies accordingly took place, chiefly in the great towns. The leading topics on the Liberal side were the necessity of rallying round the Government in its distress, and protecting the country from the dreaded invasion of the Tories; on the Conservative, the duty of adhering to the landmarks of the constitution, and preventing any farther invasion of it in Church or State. The most imposing meeting on the first side was held in Drury Lane Theatre, in honour of Mr Hume and Mr Byng, the members for Middlesex, which was attended by eleven hundred persons, and very Radical sentiments were expressed, particularly by Mr Grote. Inferior to this meeting in numbers, one much more remarkable for statesmanlike views and eloquence was given in Leeds to Lord Morpeth, the Irish Secretary. "I value," said he, "the constitution, and will do my utmost to maintain it; but under its broad and expansive shade I would remove every obstacle, and clear away

every avenue of access, to every class, to every creed, to every race, that owns its sway and courts its shelter. I would proceed in reducing and removing all the remainder of exclusive privileges and monopolies by which one class of our countrymen may be benefited to the detriment of the rest. I would give to religious as well as civil freedom the most unobstructed range; and at one act I would desire to banish from our temples and altars the clash of sordid disputes and civil bickerings. I would cling to no abuse because it is ancient; shrink from no improvement because it is change. The destiny of parties, as of nations, is beyond human ken; but I shall always, as a member of party, recollect with pride that in four short years we have reformed the representation of the people in Parliament—reformed and opened the municipal corporations of England and Scotland—swept from our blushing records the demon of slavery—opened wide the seas and shores of the globe to British trade and enterprise. And this, the legislation of four short years, has been—let the overtimid and the over-bold mark this—achieved without one form of the constitution being violated—without one breach of the law being countenanced—without one drop of human blood being spilled."

56. If those eloquent words were a glowing, and in many respects just, survey of the Whig legislation since the accession of that party to power, an occasion was ere long afforded to Sir R. Peel of declaring his political sentiments before a still greater and more influential assembly. On the 11th January 1837, a vast meeting was held in Glasgow, to which persons flocked from all the west of Scotland, in honour of that statesman, who had just been elected Lord Rector of the University there, in opposition to Sir John Campbell, the Attorney-General. Covers were laid for 3432 persons, in a magnificent hall, erected for the occasion, in the centre of the city. By far the greater part of the wealth, intelligence, and worth of the west of Scotland was assembled on the occasion;

and this embraced many who had been keen reformers five years before. Sir Robert addressed himself in an especial manner to them. "I want not," said he, "to taunt you with reaction or conversion; but I say, if you adhere to the sentiments which you professed in 1830, it is here you should come. You consented to a reform, to which you were invited in a speech by your sovereign, expressly on the condition that it should be according to the acknowledged principles of the constitution. I see the necessity of widening the foundations on which the defence of our constitution and our religious establishments must rest. But let us come to the main point, for I do not wish to conciliate your confidence by hoisting false colours. I mean to support the national establishments which connect Protestantism with the State in the three countries. (Loud cheers, the whole company rising.) I mean to support, in its full integrity, the House of Lords (loud cheers), as an essential and indispensable condition to the maintenance of the constitution under which we live. Do you also concur in that expression of opinion? (Loud acclamations.) And if you do, it is a timely declaration of it. The *hour has arrived*, when, if these are our feelings, we must be prepared to act upon them. The disturbing influence of foreign example has diminished, the dazzling illusion of the glorious days has passed away; the affections of the people are visibly gravitating again to their old centre,—full of a respect for property, a love of rational freedom, and an attachment to long-established institutions. From these walls, I trust, a spirit will go forth to animate the desponding and to encourage the timid. I look abroad from the spot on which I stand, to the moral influence of that opinion which constitutes 'the cheap defence of nations'—I look to it for the maintenance of that system of government which protects the rich from spoliation, and the poor from oppression. I look to that spirit which will range itself under no tawdry banner of revolution, but unfurl and rally round the flag that has

'braved a thousand years the battle and the breeze.' Yes! I feel not a shadow of doubt that it will continue to float in triumph, and that the constitution, tried as it has been in the storms of adversity, will come forth purified and fortified in the rooted convictions, the feelings, the affections, of a religious, a moral, and a patriotic people."

57. Parliament met on the 31st January, and so painfully evident had the weakness of Ministers become from the events of the two last sessions, that it was confidently expected by all parties that before the session closed a change of government would have taken place. This, however, was prevented by one of those events which betray the subjection of human affairs to a higher power, and the frequent disappointment of what appear at the time the most well-founded anticipations. The operation of the act permitting the establishment of joint-stock banks, and "the difficult but pressing question of establishing some legal provision for the poor in Ireland," were specially recommended to the attention of the legislature. Warm debates took place on the Address, but no division in either House. The chief point dwelt on by the Radicals was the want of earnest purpose and vigorous conduct in the Ministry, who were described by Mr Roebuck as "even worse than the Tories;" and their whole policy, both foreign and domestic, was made the subject of severe vituperation by the party which had so recently convulsed the nation with declamations in their favour as the authors of the Reform Bill.

58. The first party move made in this session was the reintroduction of the Irish Municipal Corporations Bill, which was again brought forward in the House of Commons by Lord John Russell. The only difference between this bill and the preceding one was in the nomination of sheriffs for the municipalities, in regard to which it was provided that a list of six names should be furnished by the town-council to the Lord-Lieu-

tenant, and if he rejected the whole the nomination was to rest with him. The bill, after three nights' debate, passed the Commons by a majority of 302 to 247, or 55.* When it went up to the House of Lords, symptoms of a compromise appeared. The Duke of Wellington, after observing that this was one of three bills recommended to their consideration in the Speech from the Throne, the other two relating to the Irish poor and the Irish tithes, moved that the consideration of the question should be postponed till the other measures came before them. This was carried by a majority of 77, the numbers being 192 to 115. So indignant were the Radicals at this renewed instance of independence on the part of the House of Lords, that Mr Munie said the same night, in a committee of supply in the House of Commons, that as the Lords were resolved to stop all reform, the Commons had better *put a bar to all supplies*; and he therefore moved that the chairman should leave the chair, and sit again on the 9th of June. This extreme proposal was

* Mr Sheil, in the course of this debate, gave vent to a striking burst of eloquence in reference to the epithet of "Aliens," which, during the debate on the same subject in the Upper House, had been applied to the Roman Catholics of Ireland by Lord Lyndhurst. "The Duke of Wellington," said he "is not a man of sudden emotions; but he should not, when he heard that word used, have forgotten Vimeira, and Badajoz, and Salamanca, and Toulouse, and the last glorious conflict which crowned all his former victories. On that day, when the destinies of mankind were trembling on the balance, when the batteries spread slaughter over the field, and the legions of France rushed again and again to the onset, did the 'aliens' then flinch? On that day the blood of the men of England, of Ireland, and of Scotland, was poured forth together: they fought on the same field; they died the same death; they were stretched in the same pit; their dust was commingled; the same dew of heaven fell on the grass that covered them; the same grass sprang from the soil in which they reposed together; and is it to be endured that we are to be called aliens and strangers to that empire for whose salvation our best blood has been shed?"—*Parl. Deb.* xxxvi. 936. In bursts of fervid eloquence of this description, the Irish genius is often superior to either the English or Scotch.

received with loud cheers from his own side, and only withdrawn upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer assuring the House that the money was absolutely required to discharge the obligations of the State.

• 59. The next subject introduced was that of the poor-laws in Ireland; and so urgent was the case, and so startling the facts which Mr Nicholl's valuable report brought out on the subject, that, strong as was the disposition on both sides to make Irish questions a party struggle, the bill brought in by Ministers received the concurrence of the House of Commons. Lord John Russell introduced the subject on the 13th February; and his proposal, as is generally the case when the dreaded topic of an assessment is broached in a popular assembly, fell very far short indeed of the real necessities of the case. He proposed to establish 100 workhouses, each to contain 800 inmates, which would provide for 80,000 persons, and as their cost was only estimated at 1s. 6d. a-week each, the entire expense would be only £312,000 a-year! Mr O'Connell, while he expressed, contrary to his former assertions, a qualified assent to the measure, justly exposed the utter fallacy of supposing that a measure which proposed only to afford the wretched pittance of 1s. 6d. a-week to 80,000 persons, could afford any real relief in a country where, according to Mr Nicholl's report, there were, for more than half of every year, 585,000 heads of families and 2,300,000 persons dependent on them, in a state of utter destitution. Inadequate as the measure was, however, it was a mighty step in advance in Ireland, because it laid the foundations, at least, of a more extended system, and established a set of functionaries throughout the country in connection with Government, to whom the wants of its inhabitants would become known, and their necessities communicated to the proper quarter. Great alarm was expressed at the proposed assessment of £312,000 a-year, which only showed the happy ignor-

ance of Ireland of direct taxation at that period; for the rental on which it was to be levied was £13,000,000, so that the rate on an average was only 2½ per cent. It was a striking proof how little the real state of Ireland was understood at this period, and how ignorant the statesmen of Great Britain were of the real extent of the social evils under which Ireland laboured, that in the course of this debate Lord Howick stated it as an extraordinary and alarming circumstance, that in the last year the emigrants from Great Britain and Ireland of Irish birth were 39,000;—fifteen years afterwards they reached 368,000 in one year.

60. The immense importance of the introduction of a poor-law into Ireland, on however inadequate a scale at first, was soon apparent. Commissioners were appointed to work the Act, and they made a report the following year. In a debate which took place in the next session of Parliament on an amended bill, introduced on the same subject, Mr O'Connell, appealing to the report of the Poor-Law Commissioners for the facts he stated, made the following striking observations: "There are in Ireland 585,000 heads of families in a state of actual destitution during the greater part of the year. This will imply between them and their families nearly 3,000,000 persons, for a large portion of whom relief must be provided; and it cannot be estimated that less than £1,000,000 a-year will be required. It is a singular circumstance, that in Ireland there are more agricultural labourers than in Great Britain, there being in the former country 1,131,715, and in the latter only 1,055,982. But in Great Britain there are 32,250,000 acres under cultivation—in Ireland only 14,600,000. In the former country the money value of the agricultural produce is £150,000,000 a-year—in the latter, raised by a greater number of labourers, only £36,000,000. Thus, though the quantity of cultivated land in Ireland is within a fraction equal to half that of Great Britain, *the value of its produce*

is less than a fourth. The cause of this disparity is the want of capital; and yet, in order to attract capital to the cultivation of land, it is proposed to put a heavy additional tax upon it.

61. "Another test of the poverty of Ireland is to be found in the finance returns. From these state papers up to January 5, 1837, it appeared that the total gross revenue of Great Britain for the preceding year was £55,085,000, while that of Ireland was only £4,807,000. So that Great Britain, with a population of 16,000,000, paid *eleven times* as much taxes as Ireland with a population of 8,000,000! Can anything so strongly demonstrate the inferiority of Ireland in point of property? and yet they were going to add another million to the amount of its taxation in the shape of a poor-law." There can be no doubt that the facts here referred to by Mr O'Connell were sufficiently remarkable; but it is extraordinary that so acute an observer did not see that they established another fact, utterly fatal to his constant complaint of the oppressive nature of the English government of Ireland. It followed from these figures that Great Britain, in proportion to its population, was *5½ times as heavily taxed as Ireland*; and it is in vain to pretend that this was owing to the taxes on property of the latter country being so small, for the Irish rental at this period exceeded £13,000,000, while that of Scotland was under £5,000,000!!*

* The Report of the Commissioners established several facts of the most important description, and speaking volumes as to the absolute necessity of a poor-law in Ireland. "The number of agricultural labourers in Ireland actually exceeded those of England by 75,000, while, with a less fertile soil, the amount of agricultural produce raised in England is four times greater. In England, the wages of agricultural labourers are from 8s. to 10s. a-week, in Ireland from 2s. to 2s. 6d. There are 585,000 heads of families, who for seven months in the year are without employment, and the persons dependent on them are 1,500,000 more. No less than 567,000 persons have no land, and live in summer by occasionally getting 6d. a-day wages, and in winter begging. The poverty endured by the destitute exceeds belief. Men are often found lying in bed because

62. Mr O'Connell and his whole Catholic supporters did their utmost to defeat the measure; a striking proof of the foreign influence under which they were acting, for in the former year he had given a qualified adherence to the proposal, and the evidence in support of it had since been greatly strengthened. It passed, however, by large majorities in both Houses—that in the Commons being 120 to 68; and although temporarily interrupted in its progress through the Upper House by the demise of the Sovereign, to be immediately related, it finally became law in July 1838. In the March following twenty-two unions had been declared, and in eighteen of these guardians had been appointed. In the course of 1840, no less than a hundred and twenty-seven unions were appointed, fourteen large workhouses had been erected for the reception of paupers; and the Commissioners, with just pride, reported that the measure was in full operation, and would work well for the redemption of Ireland. There was no law of *parochial* settlement introduced, and everything depended on residence in the unions. It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of this great healing measure for Ireland; for dreadful as was the distress induced by the famine of 1846, it was not one half of what it would have been, had there been, when that calamity arrived, no public establishments for the relief of the destitute, and no assessment to provide for their support. Ministers deserve the greatest credit for having carried through this most important measure, which was the more meritorious on their part that it was entirely new in Ireland, and the reluctance is always so great to admit any change, however neces-

they have nothing to eat, and the pangs of hunger are less severe there than when up. They often become thieves in order to get the protection of a jail. They lie on rotten beds, in mud cabins, with scarce any covering, feeding on unripe potatoes and yellow weeds, feigning sickness in order to get into the cholera hospital, and when there often subject to vomitings, which were mistaken for the first symptoms of that disease, the effect of mere hunger."—*Ann. Reg.* 1837, 71, 72.

sary, which involves an assessment on property. It must be added, to the honour of the reformed House of Commons, that a most creditable, patriotic, and disinterested zeal was evinced on all sides in the discussion of this measure, insomuch that, it was truly said by Mr O'Connell, it could not be discovered from the speeches to what side the members delivering them belonged. This was particularly honourable to the Protestant members of Ireland, as they represented nineteen-twentieths of the landed property of that country, upon whom the burden was to be imposed. If an exception to this remark is to be made in the case of Mr O'Connell and most of the Irish Catholic members, who ultimately resisted the measure with all their strength after its necessity had been clearly demonstrated, and its beneficial effects had already begun to be experienced, it is not so much to be ascribed as a fault to them, as lamented as a result of that foreign sacerdotal influence under which they acted, and which has so often forced them into a course directly at variance with the best interests of their native land.

63. The argument mainly relied on by the opponents of the measure, and especially insisted on by Mr O'Connell and his followers in their last opposition to it, was the well-known one so often urged by the political economists of the Malthus school, that every system of general relief to the poor, whether voluntary or compulsory, is calculated to produce more evil than it can possibly remove, because it gives an undue extension to the principle of population,—the main source, according to them, of the chief disorders and suffering of society. It never occurred to them that Ireland itself afforded a decisive proof of the erroneous nature of that opinion; for in that country, when the population was so redundant that wages were 2s. 6d. a-week, it was doubling in thirty years; while in England, where comfort was so general, and the demand for labour so considerable that wages were 10s. a-week, it did not double once in a century. Nor is it difficult to see wherein

the error consisted. Population was excessive in Ireland from the excess of poverty; the principle of increase had become unlimited in its operation, from the absence of all the checks provided by nature to its action. These checks are mainly the prudential considerations which occasion an abstinence from marriage till there is some prospect of providing for a family. Nothing destroys the operation of this check so effectually as the constant sight of unrelieved distress, and the experienced inability to better their condition, amongst the labouring poor. The typhus fever itself is not more contagious than habits of improvidence and excessive poverty, for they appeal to the strongest desires of uncivilised man, the sexual impulse and the love of ease. The poor-laws, which seized the worst cases of the *poverty patients*, and put them in public hospitals, did the same benefit to the habits of the remaining labouring classes which the abstraction of the typhus patients did to their health. It stopped the spread of the moral disorder, by secluding the worst of those afflicted with the highly contagious pestilence.

64. To conciliate the Dissenters in England, a bill was brought forward by Ministers during the session of 1837 to abolish church-rates in that country; and as the sum levied in this way was about £250,000 a-year, it was necessary to provide for it from some other source. With this view, it was proposed to take the whole property of bishops, deans, and chapters out of the hands of those functionaries, and to vest it in the hands of eleven commissioners, by whom the salaries of these functionaries were to be paid. By this means it was calculated a surplus revenue of £250,000 a-year might be realised, by depriving the Church of the profit at present derived from the renewal of leases, and this sum was to be applied to the repair of churches in lieu of church-rates. The obvious objection to this plan was, that it was based on the principle of *church spoliation*, because it proceeded on the idea that the property of the Church was to be exclusively burdened with the

expense of upholding churches instead of the whole community, and that, to realise the requisite fund, the whole property of the higher dignitaries of the Church was to be taken out of their hands. It excited, accordingly, from the very first, a warm opposition: the bishops, headed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, took the lead in resisting it; and so repugnant was it to the general feelings of the community, that the majority in the House of Commons on the second reading was only *five*—the numbers being 287 to 282. This was the narrowest division which had taken place since Sir Robert Peel's dissolution, and it was fatal to the bill, which was no further proceeded with, even in the Lower House, though it had been introduced as the leading measure of the session. Indeed, in former times, so small a majority would have at once led to the resignation of the ministry who brought it forward; but it was evident to all, that new maxims of state in this respect must follow the Reform Bill; for parties were now so equally divided that no government on either side could, on a leading party-question, expect a large majority; and therefore, to hold that such a majority was indispensable to ministerial existence, was equivalent to holding that there could never be a durable ministry at all.

65. The extremely small majority on this occasion deterred Ministers from again bringing forward the Irish Church Bill, involving the appropriation principle, this session; and the death of the King, which occurred in the middle of it, almost as a matter of necessity threw the question over to the next session. In the mean time, every exertion was made by the local government in Ireland to keep the Catholics in good-humour, and reconcile them to the postponement of their hopes of gratification from the expected humiliation of the Church. For this purpose, Lord Normanby, who was the Lord-Lieutenant, resorted to several measures, some of a judicious, others of a very questionable tendency. Of the first kind was a remodelling of the police in 1836, which was

put on a much more efficient footing. Great exertions were made to conciliate the Catholics, by placing at their disposal the greater part of the patronage of the kingdom; from the attorney-general's gown to the epaulet of the police, a favourable ear was lent to persons recommended by Romish influence. In a country abounding as Ireland did in starving ambition, this was without doubt a very powerful engine of government. But in addition to that, he had recourse to much more questionable measures. Availing himself of the prerogative of mercy, which is the brightest jewel in the viceroy's as the royal crown, he rendered it so common, and prostituted it to such interests, as rendered it a curse rather than a blessing to the country. Setting out from the Castle of Dublin, he proceeded on a regular progress through the provinces, liberating such prisoners as had had their cases favourably represented to him by the local authorities. It appeared, from his own statement in the House of Peers on 21st March 1839, when this matter was brought under discussion, that between November 1837 and January 31, 1839, he had 1631 memorials presented to him, praying for the liberation of prisoners, of whom he had liberated 822.* It must be added, that the prerogative of mercy had been as largely exercised by previous lord-lieutenants, particularly by Lord Wellesley in 1834, and that during Lord Normanby's administration there had been a sensible diminution in committals, and increase of convictions; the latter having become 71 per cent of the former. But all such wholesale use of the prerogative of mercy is dangerous, and of bad example, especially in a country such as Ireland, where party spirit ran so high, and every measure of Government, even the most humane and generous,

is invariably set down by the Opposition to the undue influence of their political opponents. When the matter, accordingly, was brought before the two Houses of Parliament, Ministers had only a majority of 26 in the Commons; while in the Lords, resolutions, condemnatory of Lord Normanby's policy, especially in the administration of justice and the distribution of mercy, brought forward by Lord Brougham, were carried, on August 1839, by a majority of 34 in a house of 138.* The result was, that Lord Normanby retired from the viceroyalty, and was succeeded by Lord Ebrington.

66. The compromise between the two Houses, evidently pointed at in the postponement of the municipal bill by the House of Lords in 1837, was prevented from being carried into effect at the time in consequence of the King's death, and dissolution consequent upon it, in the summer of that year. As the new elections, however, left the comparative strength of parties very much the same as before, the leaders on both sides saw the necessity of coming to a compromise. On the one hand, Lord Melbourne, whose easy temper and *insouciant* disposition was always inclined to avoid a difficulty rather than face it, had long been anxious to have the matter adjusted, which could only be done by mutual concessions, and he had only been restrained by the ardent feelings of his followers from going into an arrangement long before. He had now, however, become so strongly impressed with the imprudence, to give it no harsher name, of annually carrying a measure by considerable majorities in the Lower House, which was as regularly thrown out by still larger majorities in the Upper, that at length he made a compromise of the difficulty a Cabinet question. On the other hand, the Duke of Wellington and Sir R. Peel were no less impressed with the stoppage to useful legislation which resulted from this state of antagonism of the two Houses, and the danger that,

* Viz.—Memorials, 1631

Refused without advice, 371

Refused with advice, 431

Liberated without advice, 386

Liberated with advice, 634

Undisposed of, 145

—*Parl. Deb.*, xlix. 138.

* "The majority, when the case was first brought forward, was 5—63 to 58."—*Ann. Reg.* 1839, p. 60.

if it continued much longer, the nation might become convulsed on the subject, and the cry for peerage reform be as formidable as ever that for parliamentary had been. Impressed with these ideas, an approximation took place between the leaders on both sides, and the conditions of it were, that the appropriation clause was to be abandoned in the Irish Church Bill, on the one hand, and the Peers were to give way in their resistance to corporate reform in that country, on the other.

67. It was easier, however, for the leaders, who felt the responsibility of command on both sides, to come to an understanding, than to persuade their followers on either, who were animated only with the eagerness of conflict, to go into it. At length, however, though not without great difficulty, and no small ebullition of spleen on both sides, the desired adjustment was effected, though more than a year elapsed before it was fully carried into effect. On 27th March 1838, Sir R. Peel inquired of Lord John Russell what course he intended to pursue in regard to the Irish Tithe Bill, and whether he meant to introduce it with the appropriation clause in terms of the resolutions of 1835? Lord John, in reply, stated that the Ministers intended to place "the tithe question on a footing altogether new," as it appeared useless and irritating to prolong, after a conflict of four years, an argument which produced nothing. It was generally felt at the time, what was the truth, that this was an announcement of the abandonment of the appropriation clause. But in order to bring the matter to a test, Sir T. Acland, on 14th May, brought forward a distinct motion for the rescinding of the resolutions of the House, in April 1835, in favour of it. Sir R. Peel on this occasion gave vent to natural and excusable feelings of pride at seeing the Tithe Bill now reduced to the form which he had announced for it, when in power in March 1835, and the appropriation clause, which his opponents had declared to be essential to the measure, withdrawn by

their own hands. The motion was lost by a majority of 19; and it was no wonder it was so, for the House could hardly be expected to confess defeat by rescinding its own resolutions. The bill was now brought forward, on July 2, *without* the appropriation clause, and a motion made by Mr Ward for the restoration of that clause lost by a majority of 270 to 46, the Ministers themselves voting against it. The bill as it now stood passed the House of Lords without a division, and was a very great improvement, for it provided the means of a general commutation of tithes in Ireland, under a deduction of 25 per cent only, which in the circumstances was not unreasonable. There can be no doubt that Lord Melbourne acted the part of a true patriot on this occasion, for he gave up a mere party question to insure the passing of a great social improvement. That, however, was not the view taken of it by party men on either side; and Lord Brougham gave expression to the general feeling in Parliament on the subject, when he said: "I never looked to see the day when appropriation should be given to the winds, as if the thing had never been—as if it had not been the means of unseating one Ministry and seating another. So much for appropriation!—the chapter of appropriation, its origin, history, flourishing, decline, and fall; how in the fulness of time, having answered every good purpose, it has been gently laid aside and put to rest without a single requiem being sung over its grave."

68. The settlement of the Municipal Corporation Bill in Ireland did not take place quite so soon; but the compromise in regard to it, too, was in the end carried into effect. Lord John Russell, on 7th February 1837, moved for leave to bring in the Irish Municipal Bill, which was carried by a majority of 55—the numbers being 302 to 247; and, as already mentioned, the consideration of the bill was adjourned in the House of Peers till it was seen what course Ministers were to adopt in regard to the Irish Tithe Bill. Early in 1838 the bill was again introduced

by Lord John Russell in the House of Commons, and in pursuance of the agreement, Sir R. Peel did not object to the second reading, and admitted the principle of popular election, but moved in committee that £10 rating should be the qualification, which was rejected by a majority of only 20, the numbers being 286 to 266. When the bill came into the House of Lords, Lord Lyndhurst moved as an amendment that the qualification be fixed at £10, which was carried by 96 to 36. Several other minor amendments were also carried in the Peers, which were so distasteful to the Commons that Lord John Russell threw up the bill altogether for that session.

69. Matters looked very unpromising, in this stage, for the success of the compromise; and they were not materially improved in the next session of Parliament. Lord John Russell again (1839) brought forward the bill as it stood, and the second reading was carried by a majority of 26, Sir R. Peel and Lord Stanley voting with the majority. Sir R. Peel proposed, however, in committee, that the rating should be raised to £10 to confer a vote, which was carried against him in the Commons by a majority of 21, and in his favour in the Lords by a majority of 43; and upon this amendment being brought under the consideration of the Commons, Lord John Russell abandoned the bill a second time. Matters thus seemed to be inextricable, and the compromise as far as ever from being carried into effect; but in the following year (1840) it met with more success. The bill was then introduced by Lord Morpeth, on 14th February, with the rating fixed at £8, and on this occasion Sir R. Peel and his whole personal followers voted for the bill, on the ground that a settlement of the question had become indispensable, and that the bill, as now amended, was the best which in the circumstances could be got. It passed the Commons, accordingly, by a majority of 148; in the Lords, the qualification was again raised to £10, being that in the Scotch Municipal Bill; and the bill, as thus amended, having been acceded to by the Com-

mons, it passed the Lower House, and on 18th August received the royal assent.

70. An event occurred in 1837, which evinced, in striking colours, at once the ambitious designs of Russia in the East, and the weakness of Great Britain at that period to restrain her advances. Ever since the treaty of Adrianople in 1829, the Cabinet of St Petersburg had been, without intermission, pursuing that system of encroachment and aggrandisement which they had so long adopted to undermine the influence of all other powers in the Euxine. Among other designs to weaken the power of Turkey, and establish the Muscovite influence in Central Asia, they had for long waged a bloody war with the Circassian tribes inhabiting the great range of the Caucasus, which runs from the Euxine to the Caspian Sea. This war had been carried on with various success; but after a quarter of a century of almost uninterrupted hostilities the mountaineers were still unsubdued. But the Russians, according to their usual system of advancing pretensions beyond the march of their standards, took upon themselves to declare the whole coast of Circassia next the Euxine in a state of blockade.

71. William IV., to whom the honour of Great Britain, and particularly of the royal navy, was especially dear, had long viewed with undisguised jealousy these strides on the part of Russia; and in order to bring them to a test, he secretly encouraged Mr Bell, a merchant in London, to send a cargo of salt to the Circassian coast, never doubting that the Russians would not venture to violate the British flag. Before doing so, however, Mr Bell wrote to the Foreign Office, inquiring whether "the Russian blockade on the Black Sea, to the south of the river Kouban, was recognised by the British Government." To this he received an answer cautiously worded, "referring the parties to the Gazette, in which they would find all such notifications as those alluded to for the information of all concerned." Upon looking into the Gazette, no notification of the blockade in question was to be found;

and therefore Mr Bell, conceiving himself to be perfectly safe, despatched the *Vixen* with her cargo from the port of London. Mr James Bell, the supercargo, brother of the freighter, took out despatches from the Foreign Office to Lord Ponsonby, the British minister at Constantinople. To render assurance doubly sure, Mr James Bell, on reaching that city, waited on Mr Urquhart, the secretary to the embassy, and was by him referred to the ambassador. Lord Ponsonby informed him that the Russian Government had sent him an intimation of restrictions of a conditional nature on this trade, but that Russia had no right to impose any restrictions whatever, and encouraged him to persevere in his voyage, assuring him, as far as his opinion went, of the support of his own Government in case of any interference on the part of the Russian officials.* In this expectation, however, the event proved he was mistaken; for the *Vixen*, having pursued her course towards the Circassian coast, was captured, on the 29th November 1836, off Soudjouk-Kale, close under the shore, by a Russian cruiser, on account "of

* "I informed Lord Ponsonby that it was my intention to proceed in a vessel, which I expected daily, to a certain point on the coast of Circassia, which I had fixed upon as most eligible for the trade I had in view; and that as I had ascertained before leaving London that Government did not then acknowledge any right on the part of Russia to impede trade with the country in question, and as nothing had since occurred which seemed to have changed the state of affairs, I should endeavour to attain the object I had in view, and should not be diverted from it, unless force were used on the part of the Russian Government, and hoped to obtain his Lordship's aid in so doing."

"In reply his Lordship stated, that he perfectly coincided in the propriety of the plan I had adopted, to which he had no objections whatever to offer, as he considered it an indisputable fact that Russia had no right to interfere with or prescribe rules for British trade to Circassia; and that if I adhered to the straightforward course I had detailed to him, he had no doubt of my being enabled to establish a claim for support from the British Government, in which he should be glad to render me all the assistance in his power; requesting me at the same time to transmit him information as to what success attended my enterprise. — JAMES S. BELL." — URQUHART'S *Progress of Russia*, 325; and DOUBLEDAY, vi. 246.

a breach of blockade." The crew escaped on shore, where they were kindly treated by the Circassians; but the vessel and her cargo were confiscated, and declared good prize by the Russian authorities.

72. This daring outrage does not appear to have called forth any vigorous remonstrance on the part of the British Government; but it was on two different occasions made the subject of debate in the House of Commons—first on 17th March 1837, on the motion of Mr Roebuck; and again on 8th December, after the death of King William, on the motion of Mr Attwood. On both occasions the answer of Lord Palmerston was the same. He did not assert that Circassia was either virtually at war with Russia, or part of the dominions of that power: he did not assert that Soudjouk-Kale was a Russian possession: he avoided saying whether the condemnation was justifiable on the ground of breach of blockade, or municipal law, or quarantine. He simply refused to grant the papers demanded, and said that, in the whole circumstances of the case, Government saw no ground for making any further demand upon the Russian Government. The case had been submitted to the consideration of the law-officers of the Crown, but he declined to produce their opinion, from which it was justly inferred that it was unfavourable to Ministers. To the surprise of all, Sir R. Peel took no part in either debate; and thus the matter, after exciting a great ferment in the country, was allowed to drop. Many sturdy patriots, who recollected the days of Pitt and Nelson, asked where was the thunder of the British navy when such an insult was offered to its flag, and deeply lamented the sudden degradation to which the empire, without any visible external disaster, had been brought. But more calm observers, who looked beyond the surface of things, observed that the change, striking as it was, was to be ascribed to causes more remote than any timidity or weakness in the men now at the head of affairs. Government was obviously intent upon upholding the Russian alliance in order

to check the designs of France in the Levant; and Sir R. Peel felt too deeply the monetary difficulties which his own policy had brought upon the country, to venture upon a course which would at once have exposed its weakness, and entailed upon all classes unbounded disasters.

73. The monarch upon whom the measures had been forced, which necessarily led to this protracted contest between the two Houses of Parliament, did not survive to witness its termination. His health, which had been in general good since his accession to the throne, showed symptoms of decline in the spring of 1837, and increased so rapidly, that in the beginning of June it had become the cause of serious alarm to his family, whose attention to him was assiduous and tender. All the skill of his medical attendants proved insufficient to arrest the decay of nature, and he expired at Windsor at two o'clock on the morning of the 20th June. On the arrival of the news in London, orders were immediately issued for summoning a Privy Council at Kensington Palace, to take the oath of allegiance to the youthful Sovereign, QUEEN VICTORIA, daughter of the Duke of Kent, and the next in lineal descent to the throne. Her Majesty was only in her nineteenth year, having been born at Kensington Palace on 24th May 1819.

74. She was suddenly called on to assume the sceptre of the greatest empire in the world, at an age when most of her sex, even the most gifted, have just begun to mingle with general society, and introduced into an assembly of the first and noblest of the land—grey-haired statesmen, and warriors who had filled the world with their renown—to receive their willing homage. Nevertheless, the mingled majesty and grace which the youthful Sovereign exhibited on the occasion were such as to excite universal admiration, and drew tears from many eyes in the august circle which had not been wet for half a lifetime. Warriors trembled with emotion who had never felt fear in presence of their enemies. Statesmen felt abashed, albeit long inured to the

storms of the forum. The scene has been described with the truth of history, though the colours of romance, by the hand of a master. “In a sweet and thrilling voice, and with a composed mien, which indicated rather the absorbing sense of august duty than an absence of emotion, the Queen announced her accession to the throne of her ancestors, and her humble hope that Divine Providence would guard over the fulfilment of her lofty trust. The prelates and chief men of her realm then advanced to the throne, and, kneeling before her, pledged their troth, and took the sacred oath of allegiance and supremacy—allegiance to one who rules over the land that the great Macedonian could not conquer; and over a continent of which even Columbus never dreamed; to the Queen of every sea, and of nations of every zone. Fair and serene, she has the bloom and beauty of the Saxon. Will it be her proud destiny at length to bear relief to suffering millions, and with that soft hand, which might inspire troubadour and guerdon knights, break the last link in the chain of Saxon thralldom?”

75. When the ceremony of taking the oath of allegiance, which was first taken by “Ernest, King of Hanover,” had been gone through, her Majesty, with a steady voice and perfect self-possession, thus addressed her assembled councillors: “The severe and afflicting loss which the nation has sustained by the death of his Majesty, my beloved uncle, has devolved upon me the duty of administering the government of this empire. This awful responsibility is imposed upon me so suddenly, and at so early a period of my life, that I should feel myself utterly oppressed by the burden, were I not sustained by the hope that Divine Providence, which has called me to this work, will give me strength for the performance of it; and that I shall find in the purity of my intentions, and in my zeal for the public welfare, that support and those resources which usually belong to a more mature age and to long experience. I place my firm reliance upon the wisdom of Par-

liament, and upon the loyalty and affection of my people. I esteem it also a peculiar advantage that I succeed to a sovereign whose constant regard for the rights and liberties of his subjects, and whose desire to promote the amelioration of the laws and institutions of this country, have rendered his name the object of general attachment and veneration. Educated in England under the tender and enlightened care of a most affectionate mother, I have learned from my infancy to respect and love the constitution of my native country. It will be my unceasing study to maintain the reformed religion, as by law established, securing at the same time to all the full enjoyment of religious liberty. And I shall steadily protect the rights, and promote to the utmost of my power the happiness and welfare of all classes of my subjects."

76. By the accession of Queen Victoria the crown of Hanover, which was destined to heirs-male, became separated from that of Great Britain, with which that state had been united under one head since the accession of George I., then Elector of Hanover, to the throne of these realms in 1714. It descended to the Duke of Cumberland, the next surviving male heir of George III. This severance of the two crowns, which had so long been united, however, excited very little attention, and was in no respect the subject of regret; so strong was the impression in the nation, that Great Britain was essentially a maritime power, and that the connection with a comparatively small German state was a source rather of weakness than strength, by involving us in Continental politics, and often compelling the nation to give protection, when no return on a corresponding scale could be afforded. The two states have since remained on terms of confidential amity, though the policy of their respective governments has often been materially different, and the position of Hanover, as one of the great German Confederacy, naturally led to a different dependence and separate interests.

77. Shortly before the youthful heir-

ess of England ascended the throne of her fathers, another lady, in the fullness of years, descended to the tomb, who, under a different state of English law, might have sat on it. On the 27th March, Mrs FITZHERBERT expired at her house at Brighton, at the advanced age of eighty years. Her history had been very remarkable, and savoured rather of the changes of romance than the events of real life. Born on 26th July 1756, the youngest daughter of Walter Smythe, Esq. of Bambridge, in Hampshire, she was married in 1775 to Edward Webb, Esq. of Lulworth Castle, in the county of Dorset; and next to Thomas Fitzherbert, Esq. of Norbury in Surrey, who also died, without issue, in May 1781. When a widow for the second time, in 1785, in the enjoyment of an ample jointure, she met the Prince of Wales, to whom she immediately became the object of the most violent passion. Little accustomed to experience any resistance to his desires, he soon found that her virtue was proof against any but honourable intentions, while her beauty and fascination not only captivated his senses, but enthralled his imagination. The Marriage Act, however, opposed an invincible bar to a legal union with the fair enchantress; and Mr Fox, his intimate friend, in a long and eloquent letter, distinctly pointed out to him the extreme hazard with which any attempt to violate its provisions would be attended, both to the lady in question and himself. Such was the violence, however, of the Prince's passion, that he resolved at all hazards to persevere, and he at length obtained her consent to a private union, by the exhibition to her of a real or pretended attempt, in despair at her refusal, to commit suicide. The marriage ceremony was performed in private, and by a Protestant clergyman, though she was a Roman Catholic, but with perfect regularity, and in presence of witnesses; and the marriage certificate is in existence, in the hands of Messrs Coutts, the great bankers, at this moment. Mr Fox afterwards, as he said, "by authority," denied in Parliament that any such

marriage had taken place—a falsehood on the part of some one, which she never forgave. “The union proved unfortunate,” as that able man had predicted. After living together for eight years, “the happiest,” as the Prince himself said, “of his whole life,” he was separated from her shortly before his marriage in 1797 with the Princess Caroline of Brunswick; and though she, after his severance from that Princess, again reverted, by advice of the Pope, to her conjugal connection with the Prince, yet the vexations arising from her ambiguous situation—a wife, and not a wife—were such, that they were finally separated before he ascended the throne. Fortunately there was no issue of the marriage. Mrs Fitzherbert possessed uncommon talents for conversation, her manner was fascinating in a remarkable degree, and her disposition kindly and affectionate. She was always treated with the highest respect by all the members of the royal family; with their consent her servants wore the royal livery; and when George IV. descended to the tomb in 1830, he was interred, at his own request, with a miniature round his neck, which is supposed to have been that of the only person through life who had commanded his entire affections.

78. Like all other sovereigns whose reign has been marked by important changes in the balance of parties or the structure of government, the character of William IV. has been very differently drawn by opposite parties, and even by the same party at different periods of his reign. At one time he was the idol of the populace, and the “most popular king since the days of Alfred;” was never named in public without thunders of applause, as long as it was supposed he headed the popular movement, and the well-devised fable of the hackney-coach had not lost its influence on the public mind. These sentiments gave way to others of the opposite description when it was discovered he hesitated in following the movement party in their last measures; that he had refused to create peers to coerce the House of Lords;

and sent for the Duke of Wellington to extricate him from the thralldom to which he was subjected in that matter. In truth, both opinions were exaggerated, and consequently erroneous. The sailor-king was neither the hero which he was called in April 1831, nor the demon which he was styled in November 1834. He was an open-minded, kind-hearted man, with good intentions, but no great range of intellect, and few of the qualities requisite for government in the extremely difficult circumstances in which he was called to the throne. Personally brave, and with the hereditary firmness of his race, he had also a secret vein of vanity in his character, which made him sometimes court the populace when they required no courting, and led him to overlook in present applause the effect of measures which, when they appeared, he was the first to regret. In perfect ignorance of its results, he gave a willing consent to the £10 clause in the Reform Bill; and the last years of his life were spent in vain endeavours to elude the effects, and bitter regrets for having consented to the introduction, of that great and decisive innovation.

79. More serious charges were brought against him at the time by the Conservatives, of having first precipitated the march of revolution by his dissolution of the House of Commons in April 1831, and then been premature in his attempt to stop it by his change of Ministry in November 1834. Neither charge appears to be well founded. Without disputing the decisive effect of the dissolution in 1831, which, beyond all doubt, was the turning-point in the contest, it is now evident, from subsequent events and revelations that matters had then gone so far that they could not be arrested; and that, in truth, the Sovereign was then under such an amount of moral coercion that he was not a free agent. Possibly the revolution might have been arrested at an earlier period, but then it was impossible to do so. To have attempted it would certainly have led to a civil war, headed by a portion at least of the Liberal chiefs, in the course of

which, whatever party ultimately prevailed, the constitution and liberties of the country would as certainly have perished as those of Rome did in the democratic convulsion headed by Cæsar.

80. It is equally clear that the change of Ministry, and dissolution consequent on it, in the end of 1834, though not attended with the effect expected from it at the time, either by the Sovereign or the Conservatives, was a most important step, leading in the end to highly beneficial consequences in the future progress of the convulsion. It gained for the friends of the constitution what is of inestimable importance in arresting the march of revolution—time. The dissolution having reduced the former Liberal majority of 300 to 10, the House of Peers was emboldened to step forward and resume its functions as an independent branch of the legislature. The attempt to coerce them by a creation of Peers could not be renewed when the Sovereign was known to be hostile to such a measure, and experience had proved that another dissolution on such a question would probably lead only to the Conservatives obtaining a majority in the House of Commons. The Ministers, however little in reality inclined to it themselves, were forced to go on with revolutionary measures by their democratic allies; and as the Irish Catholic members constituted their entire majority, those measures were necessarily directed against the property of the Established Church. This is generally the second step in revolution: the first is to get the command of the legislature, the next to realise the fruits of victory by confiscating the property of the church. So it was in France—so it was in Spain and Portugal. But the vast majority of Liberals in the first reformed Parliament having been almost extinguished in the second, this course of measures, though attempted in this country, could not be carried through—*the progress of organic change was stopped.* The Radicals and Irish Catho-

lics raised a prodigious outcry at this unexpected impediment to their designs; but the country did not respond to it, and no important organic change has been effected, or even seriously attempted, since the Reform Bill. The Municipal Bill was a social, not a political change.

81. The reason is, that the Anglo-Saxon character, however liable to sudden fits of violence, bordering for the time on national insanity, is in general, and when it gets time to cool, essentially of a practical character. The fervid temperament of the Scotch and Irish is different: like the French, it is frequently disposed to run all the hazards of speculation and fundamental change. But the natural disposition of the majority of the English, and of nearly the whole of their rural population, is abhorrence of theoretical innovation, but passion for practical improvement. The reform fervour in England now took this direction: the national mind, having cooled down, flowed back into its old and time-worn channel. Thence an entire change in the measures forced upon the parliamentary leaders; and this is what Sir Robert Peel, with his wonted sagacity as to present objects, distinctly perceived, and which affords the key to his whole subsequent conduct. The majority of the nation supported him during the long duel between the two houses, the prize at issue in which was further organic change; but they did so only because they were averse to such changes, and longed for the real fruits of that already made. They saw that he was the real man for these practical reforms, and not the elegant nobleman, inexperienced in real business, however versed in courts, who had headed them during the reform struggle. The great political victory which unseated the Government in 1841, and the free-trade measures which immediately followed it, were both the natural consequence of the change in the national mind which was now going forward.

CHAPTER XLIII.

ENGLAND AND AMERICA, FROM THE ACCESSION OF QUEEN VICTORIA IN JUNE 1837 TO THE SUPPRESSION OF THE CHARTIST INSURRECTION IN 1839.

1. RESPLENDENT with glory, teeming with inhabitants, overflowing with riches, boundless in extent, the British Empire, at the accession of QUEEN VICTORIA, seemed the fairest and most powerful dominion upon earth. It had come victorious through the most terrible strife which ever divided mankind, and more than once, in the course of it, singly confronted Europe in arms. It had struck down the greatest conqueror of modern times. It still retained the largest part of the continent of North America, and a new hemisphere in Australia had been recently added, without opposition, to its mighty domains. All the navies of the world had sought in vain to wrest from the hands of its sovereign the sceptre of the ocean; all the industry of man, to rival in competition the produce of its manufactures or the wealth of its merchants. In science and literature it still kept the lead of all the nations of the earth. It had given birth to steam navigation, which had bridged the Atlantic, and railways, which had more than halved distance; it had revealed the electric telegraph, destined ere long to render instantaneous the transmission of thought. It had subdued realms which the Macedonian phalanx could not reach, and attained a dominion beyond what the Roman legions had conquered. An hundred and twenty millions of men, at the period of its highest prosperity, obeyed the sceptre of Alexander; as many in after-times were blessed by the rule of the Antonines; but an hundred and fifty millions peopled the realms of Queen Victoria;

and the sun never set on her dominions, for before "his declining rays had ceased to illuminate the ramparts of Quebec, his ascending beams flamed on the minarets of Calcutta."

2. Veiled under so splendid an exterior, this vast empire contained many principles of weakness, and already exhibited the symptoms of mortality. Its extent had become too great, not for its real strength, but for that portion of its strength, unhappily extremely small, which the public temper would permit to be directed to the public service. It was brought in contact with the greatest empires upon earth, and was involved in questions likely to lead to differences with them; for in the East, both in the Euxine and Central Asia, it almost adjoined the territories which acknowledged the influence of Russia; in Europe it was frequently on the verge of war with France; while in the West it was perpetually exposed to danger from the encroaching spirit of America. Yet with all these dangers, and this vast and widely scattered dominion, the naval and military forces which its popular representatives would permit to be kept on foot were wretchedly small, and totally disproportioned either to the strength of the empire, the security of its distant possessions, or even the maintenance of its own independence. The Anglo-Saxon disposition, strangely compounded of pacific and warlike qualities, the love of gain, and the thirst for glory, satiated with the latter from the splendid successes of the war, had turned, with unexampled and alarming avidity, into the former, which had now come wholly to absorb

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national mind. The idea was general, almost universal, in the commercial towns, that the era of wars had passed, that mercantile interests would henceforth rule the world, and that it was worse than useless to be at any expense at keeping up naval or military armaments which never could again be required. A thirst for gain had seized all classes; each was at once ambitious and discontented; and in their passion for advancement they had come to inflict serious wounds on each other.

3. Realised wealth had established a system of currency which, for its own advantage, landed the nation every four or five years in a long course of suffering, as necessarily as night succeeds day; and suffering poverty sought protection from its consequences as regards its only property—labour—in strikes, which diffused universal suffering, and permanently alienated the different classes of society from each other. Great prosperity had recently been enjoyed, but it had passed away; the tide had turned, and suffering, general and long-continued, was in prospect, likely only the more severely to be felt from the contrast it would exhibit to the prosperity which had preceded it. A sore feeling had come to pervade all ranks of society: the labouring, at least in towns, regarded their employers as their natural enemies, who were unjustly enriched with the fruits of their toil; the more wealthy looked on the working classes as spoilers ready to seize upon their property, on the first opportunity, either by open violence or legislative enactment. A great political revolution, happily without bloodshed, had recently taken place, but it had effected no practical alterations in society, or amelioration in the condition of the people, except substituting the monied aristocracy in towns for the landed aristocracy in the country as the rulers of the State. The democratic leaders had taken advantage of the general disappointment, which the blasting of the hopes excited by this change had occasioned, to excite the feelings of the

working classes in the manufacturing districts against the whole institutions of the country: Chartism was rife in Great Britain; organised agitation perpetuated misery in Ireland; Canada was on the verge of open insurrection; and the recent emancipation of the slaves in the West Indies, without materially benefiting them, had implanted the seeds of ruin in the planters. So many causes of danger could not fail ere long to produce a convulsion in some part of the empire, but, strange to say, it was first induced by external, not internal, influences. It arose from democratic ambition in the United States of America, and the severity of nature in the British Islands.

4. Possessed of a territory ten times the area of France, and capable of maintaining in ease and comfort three hundred and fifty millions of inhabitants, with a soil generally rich and fertile, and intersected by a network of innumerable rivers, the natural canals of the country, the United States wanted only two things to become ere long the richest and most populous empire upon earth. These two things were *men and money*; but they were indispensable to the development of their resources. The forests with which the country was covered had overspread the earth with a rich soil, and mingled vegetable and animal remains of several feet in thickness, which promised a long course of fine harvests from its virgin riches; but it was still overshadowed by their massy boughs, and the axo of the backwoodsman was required for a course of years to ent down its primeval stems, and tear out its gigantic roots. Emigrants were coming in considerable numbers from Europe—those from the British Islands had already reached 60,000 annually; but they were lost in this immensity of space, and presented only a thin line of labourers, the pioneers of civilisation, along a frontier 1700 miles long where it was working into the forest. Capital was required for every new undertaking, but great as was the energy, unbounded the activity of the

inhabitants of the United States, it could not be found in sufficient quantities from their unaided resources; and the wages of labour, from the scarcity of hands, were so high that capital had little inducement to migrate from England to settle in a country where, although rent was nothing, the cost of production was double its own. The produce of the mines of gold and silver over the globe had been so fearfully diminished by the disastrous wars consequent on the South American revolution, that the annual supply for the use of ~~the~~ whole world had fallen below £9,000,000 — not half its former amount—and this was nearly all absorbed by the necessities of Europe. Thus America, albeit splendidly furnished by all the blessings of nature, might have been chained to a slow progress, and at length slumbered on with a population doubling, like Europe, in five hundred years, were it not for one discovery which supplied all deficiencies, and kept it abreast of its destiny. This discovery was a PAPER CURRENCY.

5. This powerful agent for good, or for evil was never more required, and has nowhere produced more important effects than in the United States of America. It is historically known that the establishment of their independence, like the successful issue of the war of Rome with Carthage, and Great Britain with Napoleon, was mainly owing to the paper bearing a forced circulation, which was so plentifully issued by the insurgent States during the course of the contest. During the war with England, in 1814, cash payments were universally and unavoidably suspended, and an immense amount of confusion and mercantile distress ensued in consequence in all the States of the Union. Banks had been established to the number of 246, which issued their own notes without limitation, which circulated through all the States of the Union, some at par, others at various degrees of discount, sometimes as much as a half, according to the reputed solvency of the establishment from which they

issued; and the mass of notes in circulation was as great as it afterwards became in 1834, with a population nearly double, and transactions three times as extensive. It was impossible that such a state of things could be allowed to continue, and to get out of it, Government, in 1816, established, by an act of the Congress, the famous Bank of the United States, with a capital of 35,000,000 dollars, and a charter for twenty years. Such was the combined energy and prudence of this great establishment, that, soon after its opening, cash payments were resumed in all the banks of New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Boston, and soon after in all the banks of the Union. This important transition, however, was not made without great difficulty and an immense amount of embarrassment and insolvency. Between 1811 and 1820 no less than 345 banks, in different parts of the Union, either became bankrupt or withdrew from business. During this period of return to cash payments, industry was essentially blighted, suffering was universal, and the people, glad as usual to fix the responsibility of misfortune on any one but themselves, generally ascribed it to the banking system, which, though grievously abused, had been the mainspring of their progress, and the principal cause of their prosperity.

6. Great as these evils were—the unavoidable result of an immense issue of paper without either responsibility or control—they were in a considerable measure modified by the prudent conduct, high credit, and great influence of the United States Bank. Such was the effect of its general direction in banking affairs that all the disasters of the six years preceding 1820 were forgotten in the unbounded prosperity of the fifteen years which succeeded it. Although the United States shared to a certain degree in the commercial disasters consequent on the resumption of cash payments in Great Britain in 1819, and the consequent monetary crisis of 1825 and 1832, yet this period was, upon

the whole, one of extraordinary and unprecedented prosperity over their whole extent. Prices were high, but wages were still higher; ease and contentment generally prevailed; cultivated land was encroaching at the rate of seventeen miles a-year over a frontier seventeen hundred miles in length, upon the gloom of the forest; and the seaport towns on the coast, sharing in the vast commerce which such a rapid increase of production required, were rapidly advancing in wealth, population, and enterprise. During these fifteen years the population of the United States advanced 65 per cent; its exports and imports doubled, and a vast stream of emigrants from the British Isles, which had come at last to be above 50,000 a-year, added to the prolific power of nature in providing hands to keep pace with this immense increase.* It is to the influence of the American banks in furnishing the means of cultivation and improvement to the hardy settlers in the forest, that the superior aspect of the American side of the St Lawrence to the British, which has attracted the notice of every traveller, is mainly to be ascribed.

7. As the paper currency of the United States has done such great things in sustaining and vivifying the industry of the country, it was not to

be expected that it could have been conducted without many instances of reckless, some of culpable, mismanagement. So great had the demand for money become in consequence of the immense undertakings which were everywhere going forward, that the discounts of the banks in the year 1831 had reached the enormous amount of 250,000,000 dollars, great part of which was discounted at the extravagant rate of 15, 18, and 20 per cent. On the 1st January 1835, there were in the United States 557 banks, besides 121 branches; their capital was 231,250,000 dollars (£57,500,000), the notes they had in circulation amounted to 103,692,000 dollars (£25,500,000), their annual discounts were 365,143,000 dollars (£90,600,000), and the entire treasure in their vaults was 43,937,000 dollars, or £10,990,000. These figures demonstrate that, however reckless and extravagant the issue of some of these banks had been, yet their conduct upon the whole had been safe and judicious; for the proportion of notes issued to the gold and silver possessed, was, on the whole, as 11 to 26, or as 1 to 2½;—a proportion greater than what has for a century been deemed necessary by the Scotch banks, whose prudence and good management have become proverbial; and more than triple the proportion of specie to notes out-

* POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES.

1820,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	9,638,226
1830,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	12,853,838
1840,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	17,068,660
1850,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	23,191,876
1860,	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	31,445,080

—*American Census*, 1840; and *Almanach de Gotha* for 1864.

EXPORTS AND IMPORTS OF THE UNITED STATES FROM 1824 TO 1837.

	Imports Dollars.	Exports Dollars.
1824,	80,549,007	75,986,657
1825,	96,340,075	99,535,388
1826,	84,974,477	77,595,322
1827,	79,484,068	82,324,827
1828,	88,509,824	72,264,686
1829,	74,492,527	72,358,671
1830,	70,876,920	73,849,508
1831,	103,191,124	81,310,583
1832,	101,029,266	87,176,943
1833,	108,118,311	90,140,433
1834,	126,521,332	104,346,973
1835,	149,895,749	121,693,577
1836,	189,880,035	128,663,040

—*TOOKE'S History of Prices*, iv. 469.

held during the same period by the Bank of England.*●●

*8. One main use to which these large issues of the banks had been applied was in the purchase of waste lands on the frontier, which were in great part bought with advances made by banks established in the States to which the lands sold belonged. So rapid had been the progress of population and increase of cultivation on

the frontiers of the forest, or in its recesses, that advances made on the security of lots purchased rarely proved unfortunate, the rise in the value of the lot bought increasing so rapidly as in a few years to much more than pay off the loan contracted. The territories at the disposal of the States were immense; they amounted to 990,000 square miles, or about 680,000,000 acres. Of these the Gov-

* Number of Banks, Capital, Cash held by each, Bills under Discount, and Notes in circulation, on January 1, 1835, in all the States of the Union:—

STATES.	No of Banks	Capital	Bills under Discount	Notes in Circulation.	Specie
		Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars
Maine,	36	3,499,850	5,249,509	1,709,320	171,928
New Hampshire,	26	2,655,003	3,929,235	1,387,970	..
Vermont,	18	921,813	1,870,813	1,468,713	50,958
Massachusetts,	105	30,409,450	48,901,142	7,868,472	1,180,584
Rhode Island,	60	8,097,432	9,694,331	1,290,785	473,641
Connecticut,	31	7,350,766	8,899,656	2,685,400	129,108
New York,	87	31,581,460	02,775,200	16,427,963	7,221,335
New Jersey,	24	50,000	43,130	30,247	..
Pennsylvania,	44	17,958,444	28,739,130	7,818,011	3,476,462
Delaware,	4	730,000	1,232,850	622,397	173,183
Maryland,	15	7,542,639	9,520,683	1,923,055	972,090
Federal District,	7	2,613,985	3,115,524	692,530	474,199
Virginia,	5	5,340,000	11,277,304	5,595,198	1,160,401
North Carolina,	4	2,464,925	3,360,977	2,241,964	275,660
South Carolina,	8	2,156,318	3,886,441	2,288,030	754,219
Georgia,	13	6,783,308	7,714,851	3,694,329	1,781,830
Florida,	3	114,320	233,209	133,531	14,312
Alabama,	2	5,607,623	9,219,586	3,472,413	916,135
Louisiana,	11	26,422,145	37,388,859	5,114,082	2,824,904
Mississippi,	5	5,890,162	10,379,650	2,418,475	359,302
Tennessee,	3	2,890,381	6,040,037	3,189,220	290,472
Kentucky,	6	4,898,685	7,671,066	2,771,154	872,368
Missouri,	1	..	85,707	..	155,341
Illinois,	1	278,739	313,902	178,810	243,225
Indiana,	1	800,000	531,843	458,065	751,083
Ohio,	31	6,390,741	10,071,250	5,654,048	1,906,715
Michigan,	7	658,980	1,336,225	636,670	112,419
United States Bank,	1	34,000,000	51,941,036	17,339,797	15,708,369
Unofficially reported, included in number of banks, . . . . .	..	11,643,111	19,737,619	4,588,844	1,487,414
	557	231,250,337	365,163,834	103,692,495	43,937,625
In pounds sterling,		£57,812,334	£91,240,201	£25,923,124	£10,984,406

—CHEVALIER, l. 378.

The proportion of cash held by and notes in circulation of the Bank of England, Scotch and Irish banks, on an average of the month preceding April 12, 1856, was as follows:—

	Notes issued.	Cash held.
Bank of England,	£20,225,584	£9,806,880
Irish banks,	6,474,712	2,122,808
Scotch banks,	3,785,383	1,680,438
	£30,485,659	£13,610,211

Of the cash held by the Bank of England, £8,000,000 must be retained in the issue department; so that the real stock of bullion against £20,225,000 in notes was £1,806,000 in April 1856.—*London Gazette*, April 12 and May 2, 1856.

ernment, since 1784, had sold above 60,000,000, and the sales had of late years gone on increasing in an extraordinary progression: in seven years succeeding 1828, their annual amount, and the price received for them, had risen to ten times its former amount.* But this was only the commencement of the great inroad of civilised man upon the forest; a progress twofold greater awaited him; and so rapid had been the rise in the value of land on the frontier, that nearly all who had engaged in it of late years had made money by their purchases—some great fortunes; and the banks which had advanced the money were in a state of unprecedented affluence. From this very prosperity arose the storm which ere long involved the United States in woe, and by its influence across the Atlantic produced effects of the last importance on the British empire.

9. In the states of Europe—and the case had been the same in the Roman empire—the great landed estates in the country were originally acquired by the right of conquest. They were the grants made by a victorious chieftain to his followers; and though in many, perhaps most instances, they afterwards changed hands, and were acquired by commercial wealth, yet the purchasers rapidly acquired the feelings, and became actuated by the interests, of the more elevated and dignified circle into which they had been admitted. Hence the majority of the landed aristocracy, both of new and old descent, is always conservative and monarchical in its ideas, and the elements of freedom and popular government first appear in the great

hives of industry produced by manufacturing and commercial activity. The passing of the Reform Bill was the first and greatest triumph of the latter over the former. In America the case is just the reverse. The aristocracy is there found in the towns, the democracy in the country. The reason is, that it is in the former alone that the means of making considerable fortunes exist. The forests being there pierced and the wilds cultivated by the arms of laborious industry, not won by the sword of victorious conquest, it was soon found that the retention of land without its occupation was impossible. The feudal baron might do this, living in his strong castle, surrounded by his armed retainers; to the pacific colonist dwelling in his log-house, and aided only by a few backwoodsmen, the thing was impossible. In all the colonies, accordingly, whether of America or Australia, the limits of retainable property have been found to be little beyond those of actual occupation. All attempts to found great estates by the purchase or grants of large tracts of country, have been in the end defeated by the experienced impossibility of keeping off the squatters from tracts of good land not actually cleared, or about to be so, by the axe of the backwoodsman.

10. Society being thus constituted by the strongest of all laws—that of necessity—the only places in which the growth of fortunes was practicable were the towns, especially the commercial ones on the sea-coast. To them the vast progress of the back settlements, from the labour of the equal Anglo-Saxon freemen, afforded the greatest possible advantages: for the produce of their fields, teeming with the riches of a virgin soil, afforded an immense amount of rude produce, which the wealth and redundant population of Europe were ever ready to take off; while their wants, even in a simple and primeval state of society, presented a vast and growing market for the manufacturing industry of the Old World. This was the secret of the great export of British manufactures

* QUANTITIES OF LAND SOLD AND PRICE RECEIVED IN AMERICA.

	Acres.	Price received.
1828, . . .	750,000	£221,000
1820, . . .	1,260,000	324,000
1830, . . .	1,740,000	364,000
1831, . . .	2,500,000	694,000
1832, . . .	1,040,000	560,000
1833, . . .	4,500,000	845,000
1834, . . .	4,720,000	1,040,000
1835, . . .	7,500,000	2,480,000

—Report of Secretary to the Treasury of the United States, Dec. 9, 1835; and CHEVALIER, i. 413.

to the United States, which had now come to amount to £12,000,000 declared value yearly—a quantity equal to what £24,000,000 would have been at the war prices. This prodigious traffic, the most important in which England was engaged, all passed through New York, Pennsylvania, Baltimore, New Orleans, Boston, and the other great towns on the sea-coast, and was of course in a great degree monopolised by the chief mercantile houses who possessed the capital or could command the credit necessary for carrying it on. To them, credit and an extensive paper currency were the condition of existence; they were as indispensable as the axe and the plough to the settlers in the Far West. As wealth flowed in rapidly to those who could command the assistance of this potent auxiliary, fortunes grew up rapidly, and with them the habits, interests, and desires of a mercantile aristocracy.

11. But meanwhile the very reverse of all this obtained in the backwoods, where the market for this immense commerce was in process of formation. There the forest settlers, detached from each other, each cultivating his little freehold alone, were in habits of independence by the necessities of their situation. No aid from Government could be obtained on any emergency; no regular troops were at hand to aid in repelling an assault from the savages; no fortified place existed to serve as a place of refuge, or an asylum for their wives and children in case of disaster. In such circumstances, self-government became a habit, because self-defence was a necessity. The backwoodsmen, and the cultivators, who succeeded to their cleared domains, accustomed to rely on their own resources, and to act for themselves in every emergency, required no aid from any superior power, and were not disposed to submit to any control. A feeling of independence, and a resolution to assert it alike against foreign invasion and domestic authority, arises inevitably and universally in the human mind in such circumstances. Accordingly, it had long been found that the representatives sent by the fron-

tier States to the Congress were the most democratic, and the final ascendancy of their party has been owing to the unparalleled growth of the population in the basin of the Mississippi, and beyond the Alleghany Mountains.

12. A contest for the majority in the legislature, and the consequent command of the government, is a matter of far greater importance, and rouses the passions much more strongly, in America, than a similar conflict in the constitutional monarchies of Europe. The reason is, that, owing to the republican form of government, a much greater number of persons are interested in, and hope to profit by it. The majority in Congress being determined by the votes of between 2,000,000 and 3,000,000 of voters in the State, and *no other influence*, parties have long felt the necessity of rousing the multitude to their support by offering to them not merely the empty honours, but the substantial fruits of victory. This is effected by an immense multiplication of offices, more highly paid in proportion to their value as they descend in the scale, and come within the reach of the democracy, and a rigorous displacing of their occupants when a change in government takes place. It is calculated that there were, in 1837, 60,000 offices in America at the disposal of the executive, all of which are changed on a change of ministry.* Thus the voters have an immense number of offices to look for in the event of their party gaining the ascendancy in Congress. This vast multiplication of offices is not complained of, because each party hopes to profit by it—just as in England we hear nothing of the evils of patronage, at least from the popular press, when their party are in power, and it is showered down upon themselves. These offices are the allotment of the conquered lands, the prospect of which so vehemently excited the Roman soldiery, and the contest for which, under the name of an agrarian law, at length occasioned the ruin of the republic.

13. As there were no great landed

* The number is now (1860) 130,000.

proprietors in America, and commercial wealth alone could form the basis of an aristocracy, the banks in the great towns, especially on the sea-coast, early excited the jealousy of the ambitious democrats in the interior. Being composed of hard-headed practical men, and led by chiefs of acknowledged ability, they were not long in perceiving that it was the system of credit, built upon the advances made by these banks, that was the foundation on which the commercial aristocracy, which had often ruled the Union, and got the command of the numerous offices at the disposal of the executive, rested. If they could only destroy the banks, the axe would be laid to the root of the commercial aristocracy, as completely as it would to an army if you cut off its supplies. When this desirable consummation was effected, no obstacle would remain to their undisputed and permanent government of the republic, and enjoyment of its fruits. With the usual selfishness and blindness of faction, they resolved to prosecute their object with all their forces, regardless of its inevitable consequences, and careless although the branch they were in such haste to cut away should be that on which they themselves sat. They were not long in effecting their object, and bringing that ruin upon their country, and elevation for a season to themselves, which might reasonably have been expected from their proceedings.

14. GENERAL JACKSON was at this period the President of the Republic, an eminence which he had attained in consequence of his successful defence of the lines before New Orleans against the English in 1814. He was the head of the democratic party by whom he had been placed in power, and being a violent party-man, without commercial interests or connections, he determined to follow out the wishes of his constituents without any regard to the effects of the measures they advocated upon the general prosperity of the Union, or even their own ultimate interests. To effect this object, a crusade was set on foot against the banks, and especially that

of the United States, in which the press took the lead. Three-fourths of the 1265 journals which at that period were published in the United States, were enlisted in the war against those establishments. This is nothing extraordinary: the press invariably fawns the passions of the moment, and follows the wishes of the numerical majority of its readers, how unreasonable soever they may be. By this means, and the unceasing activity of the whole political agents of the majority over the Union, the people beyond the sphere of the commercial towns were worked up to a state of perfect frenzy against the banks; and General Jackson's war against the United States banks was regarded with as much enthusiasm as ever his defence of New Orleans had been. Since the fervour of France in 1789, and of England in 1832, nothing in the world had been seen like it. The cry "Bank or no Bank!" convulsed the Union as violently as that of "Liberté et Egalité!" had done France, or "The Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill!" had shaken England.

15. The ostensible grounds of complaint preferred by the President against the banks were—1st, That they had intrigued to obtain the renewal of their charter during the session 1831-2, in order either to force him to consent to it, or throw all their adherents into opposition to him at the next election. 2d, That they had exerted their influence against him in the election of 1832, and increased their discounts by 28,500,000 dollars to augment their own. 3d, That they had corrupted the press, especially in the commercial towns, to support their cause. The banks answered—1st, That the President had, in his opening address to the Congress in 1831, recommended the bank question to their consideration, with a view to its early decision. 2d, That the increase of their discounts had been no more than was required by the extension and necessities of commerce. 3d, That being menaced with destruction from a

powerful party in the State, with the President at its head, they were perfectly entitled to defend themselves at the bar of public opinion, and that no way of doing that could be so safe and legitimate as reprinting the speeches of enlightened men in their favour, which was all they had done. These were the ostensible grounds of debate between the parties; the real causes of discord were very different, and were as carefully concealed as the pretended ones were ostentatiously put forward. They were the inherent jealousy, on the one hand, of democracy at eminence foreign to itself, whether in rank, fortune, genius, learning, or accomplishment; and the vanity of newborn wealth on the other, which sought to overbear all other interests in the State by the sway of capital, and had imprudently let fall hints, that the time was not far distant when, by means of the influence of mercantile advances, they would gain the entire command of the State.

16. The democratic party were the more alarmed at the growing influence of the bank interest in the Union, from the vast extension of paper advances which had recently taken place for the purchase of lots of waste lands in the back settlements. These rude agricultural districts, the cradles of a sturdy and robust democracy, had hitherto been their stronghold, and enabled them, by their rapid extension, to outvote the commercial towns on the coast, which were for the most part in the opposite interest. But when banks were established in all the back settlements, and made liberal advances to settlers to enable them to purchase lots of the public lands, upon the security of the deposit of their title-deeds, this source of power was likely not only to be lost to them, but gained to their enemies. It is well known that there is no influence so difficult to resist as that of a creditor; and when nearly all the settlers on the frontier in the valley of the Mississippi had purchased their freeholds with money advanced by banks with whom their title-deeds

were deposited, it was easy to see that a great, and to the Democrats most alarming, source of influence was opened up in what had hitherto been the centre of their power. Had the Government been animated by a real patriotic spirit, what they should have done, obviously, was to have retained the credit system, under which the nation had made such unparalleled progress, but put it under such regulations as should have checked the over-issue of paper, and secured the stability of such as was in circulation. But being actuated, not by the enlightened spirit of patriotism, but the blind passions of faction, they did just the reverse, and adopted a course of measures which brought ruin upon the banks, bankruptcy and desolation upon the country, and the effects of which, extending beyond the Atlantic, produced a crisis of the most terrible kind in Great Britain, a crisis which was the main cause of the long-continued suffering which terminated in the entire change of her commercial policy.

17. The charter of the United States Bank being only for twenty years from 1816, the directors of that establishment, under the direction of their able chairman, Mr Biddle, brought forward a bill in 1832 to authorise its renewal for the like term of years. This was the signal for the deadly strife which ensued. War to the knife was immediately proclaimed by the whole democratic party over the Union, not only against the United States Bank, but against *all the banks* in the country, no matter how long their establishment, how high their credit, how widespread their beneficence. The creatures of their bounty, the citizens who owed their all to their courageous enterprise, the holders of fields won from the forest by their advances, were the first, like the serpent in the fable, when warmed into life, to sting their benefactors. The legislature, however, took a more enlightened view of the subject; and after the publication of very able reports, which went fully into the subject, both Houses of Con-

gress (March 7, 1832) passed the bill, renewing the charter of the United States Bank, by considerable majorities. But the democratic party were not discouraged. Secure of the concurrence of General Jackson, the President, they raised such a clamor against the Bank in the newspapers, that he was induced to oppose the Veto which the constitution intrusted to him to the bill. It was the old story of Rome over again: democratic ambition, led on by a dictator, was crushing the aristocracy of property and intelligence.

18. Not content with putting a negativo on the act passed by the Congress renewing the Bank Charter, General Jackson, in the succeeding year, went a step farther, and took the very hazardous step of withdrawing the whole public deposits from the United States Bank and its branches,* and handing them over to the local banks.* No measure could be imagined more hazardous in a mercantile point of view, as it implied such a serious dis-

* The principal charge brought against the Bank, in a paper justifying this step, published on 18th September 1833, was this: "Although the charter of the Bank was approaching its termination, and the Bank was aware it was the intention of Government to use the public deposits as fast as they accrued in the payment of the public debt, yet it did extend its loans, from January 1831 to May 1832, from 32,402,304 dollars to 70,428,070 dollars, being an increase of 28,056,766 dollars in sixteen months. It is confidently believed that the leading object of this immense extension of its loans was to bring as large a portion of the people *under its power and influence as possible*, and it has been disclosed that some of the largest loans were granted on very unusual terms to conductors of the public press. In some of these cases, the motives were made manifest by the nominal or insufficient security taken for the loans, by the large amounts discounted, by the extraordinary time allowed for payment, and especially by the subsequent conduct of those receiving the accommodation." It was to compel the President to take his stand that the bill was brought forward for the renewal of the Bank Charter at the time it was. He met the challenge, willingly took the position into which his adversaries sought to force him, and frankly declared his unalterable opposition to the Bank, as being both unconstitutional and inexpedient.—GENERAL JACKSON'S *Memoir*, September 18, 1832; *Annual Register*, 1833, p. 800 note.

trust of the solvency of the first banking establishment in the country, as could hardly fail to shake its stability and that of all similar establishments. But as a mere party-move, it was well conceived, as it tended to divide the banking interest, and induce the local banks, which got the deposits on interest, to remain at least neuter in the effort to destroy the United States Bank, from which they had been taken. Once taken, however, the decisive step was attended by the effects which might have been anticipated. The United States Bank, thus violently assailed, and openly charged with insolvency by the Government, was compelled, in its own defence, suddenly, and to a great extent, to contract its operations. This, like all similar changes brought about in the midst of a period of high prosperity and great undertakings, gave a violent shock to credit, produced a similar contraction of issues on the part of all other banks, and speedily spread embarrassment and insolvency throughout the community. These disasters were immediately taken advantage of by the democratic party, who represented them as the fatal result of the banking system, when, in fact, it was the consequence of the impediment thrown in the way of its operations,—as the effect of the extension of credit, when, in truth, it was so of its contraction.

19. These violent stretches on the part of the democratic President caused, as soon as Congress met, stormy debates in both houses, which were contemporaneous with meetings on the subject, when the most violent language was used on both sides in every part of the Union. The House of Representatives, by a majority of 15 in a house of 240, approved of the measures of the President, and passed resolutions, that the charter of the Bank should not be renewed, and that the public deposits should not be restored to it. On the other hand, the Senate, by a majority of 26 in a house of 46, voted "that the President, in the late executive proceedings, had assumed to himself authority and power not conferred by the constitution and

laws, but in derogation of both." * Thus the two houses, as in England on the Reform Bill, were brought into direct collision; and this was the more serious, that the Senate shared with the President the executive authority, and formed the court before which he was appointed by the constitution to be tried, if charged with malversation in office. So determined were the senators in their condemnation of the measures of the President, that they refused to receive, or put upon their journals, a protest and explanatory memoir, which he drew up and published in defence of his proceedings. A similar division was observed in all the States, among whose inhabitants meetings took place everywhere, to consider the all-engrossing topic. Generally speaking, the States on the coast coincided with the Senate, those beyond the Alleghany Mountains and in the Far West with the House of Representatives. The weight of intellect was decidedly with the former, that of numbers as decisively with the latter: Mr Clay, Mr Webster, and Mr Calhoun, made powerful speeches in favour of the Bank. But what the democratic orators wanted in argument they made up in violence, which was more powerful with the unthinking multitude. To find a parallel to the vehemence of their harangues, we must go back to the ardent declamations of the French Republicans in 1791 and 1792. The topics, the ideas, were the same; the objects of the animosity only were different. It was not the landed "aristocrats," but the "commercial aristocracy," which was the object of ceaseless obloquy. The corruption, selfishness, seduction, and despotic views of the moneyed class, were the subject of incessant declamation, and not a few declared that Mr Biddle, the chairman of the United

States Bank, would end by making himself king.

20. In the mean time the general shake given to commercial credit by the open war, declared by a numerical majority in the Union, with the President at its head, against the United States Bank, produced the most disastrous effects, far exceeding in intensity anything which the promoters of the war contemplated. Mr Cobbett addressed a long letter to General Jackson, congratulating him on the success of his efforts to destroy the United States Bank; the first step, it was to be hoped, to the destruction of all other banks. The whole banks throughout the Union, seeing the violence of the storm which was brewing against them, adopted the most stringent measures in their own defence; they rapidly contracted their issues, and made the most strenuous efforts to augment their metallic reserves. The consequence was, that gold rose so much in value in the Union, that it flowed into the country to an unprecedented extent; and the excess imported over that exported, from 1st January 1833 to 1st July 1834, amounted to £5,501,000. In the chief States of the Union the result was, that a metallic was in a great degree substituted for a paper currency; but as its amount was not a third of what the bank-notes had been, the utmost distress and anxiety pervaded the whole country, and in the State of New York it rose to such a pitch, that the local legislature authorised a State loan, to the banks in the province, of £1,500,000, to enable them to continue the most necessary advances.

21. Struck with consternation at this succession of commercial disasters, the merchants and bankers of New York had a meeting, at which a petition to the President was agreed to, which soon received ten thousand signatures, embracing the whole wealth and intelligence of the place, in favour of the Bank. General Jackson received it, and coolly answered, that he believed "the petition expressed the sentiments of Wall Street and Pearl Street, but that Wall Street and Pearl

* The Senate in the United States consists of forty-eight members, two for each State of the Union, elected by their legislatures. The House of Representatives is elected by the direct suffrage of the inhabitants. From the former being the result of a double election, it is in general more identified with the interests of property than the latter, chosen directly by universal suffrage.

Street were not the people of America." * He was right; for although New York was the chief commercial city of the Union, and had increased tenfold in population and a hundredfold in riches within the last fifty years, and converted the wilderness, a hundred leagues around, into fruitful fields, yet there can be no doubt that a majority of the Union, *told by head*, was on the opposite side, and cordially supported the President in his crusade—not only in his crusade against the United States Bank, but almost *all* the banks in the country. It was generally believed, and it was generally told, that the banks were a set of infamous usurers, determined to starve the noble soldiers of independence; and the cry was general with the populace in all parts of the Union, "Hurrah for Jackson! down with the Bank!"

22. Such was the effect of this cry, with which the United States were so convulsed that the people entirely lost their senses, and ran headlong, despite all the warnings of Mr Webster and Mr Clay, on their own destruction. By the elections in the autumn of 1834, the majority of General Jackson was increased in the House of Representatives by twenty votes. Strengthened by this accession of numbers, the President continued with increased vehemence his hostility to the Bank, and early in the session of 1835 recommended, in his Message to the Congress, that its notes should *not be received in payment of taxes*, and that all laws connecting the Bank, directly or indirectly, with the Government should be repealed. How strongly soever the Bank party was intrenched in the Upper House, they felt it in vain to continue the contest any longer, for their charter would expire next year, and it could only be renewed by an act of both houses, which could not now be looked for, as the last election had made the majority of the President in the lower beyond the reach of resistance. They therefore bent to the storm

* The Lombard Street and Regent Street of New York, where the chief banking-houses and most splendid shops are to be found.

which they could not resist, and took steps to wind up their affairs with as little detriment to the community as possible. This was immediately set about, and the Bank disposed of its debts at, and closed, twenty-one out of its twenty-seven branches. The winding-up of its affairs which then took place proved its credit beyond a doubt; for its assets were 49,313,000 dollars, and its liabilities only 27,656,000; and to meet 22,113,000 in notes, it had 8,749,000 in specie in its coffers!

23. Cut off from their connection with the State, and deprived of all hope of a renewal of their charter from the Legislature, the directors of the United States Bank obtained a charter from the local legislature of Pennsylvania, to which they paid a bonus of 2,000,000 dollars; and though they experienced great opposition from the banks in the western States, which at first refused to take their notes, they succeeded, in spite of all the opposition of the President, in establishing an extensive business. But now appeared the fatal effects of the measures adopted by Government to destroy the United States Bank. The States in the valley of the Mississippi, encouraged by the support of Government, and strong in the possession, through their banks, of the public deposits, rushed, as it were, with inconsiderate fury into the void created by the contraction of the business of the United States Bank, which had been conducted with comparative prudence. It was soon seen what free trade in banking will speedily become. The President had sought to destroy one bank, of which he was jealous, on the coast: he did so; but in so doing he reared up a hundred far more perilous in the Far West. Indiana, Ohio, Massachusetts, Alabama, Maine, created new banks with surprising rapidity, which instantly began issuing notes, on the security of the title-deeds of lots of purchased lands. New York, in three days, erected banks with six millions of dollars as capital. Money was freely advanced, but such was the demand for it that 2 per cent *a-month* was usually asked and given. The law against issuing notes below £1 was

generally evaded in the frontier States. Land in the back settlements was sold and resold in lots to such an extent that it became a mere stock-jobbing concern, without any intention, on the part of most of the purchasers, of any settlement. The effect of his own measures cannot be better described than by the President himself, in his Message to the Congress at the end of 1835.

24. "The effect," said he, "of the over-extension of bank credits and over-issue of paper have been strikingly exemplified in the sales of the public lands. From the returns made by the receivers in the early part of last summer, it appeared that the receipts arising from the sale of the public lands were increasing to an unprecedented amount. In effect, however, these receipts amounted to nothing more than credits in bank. The banks lent out their notes to speculators; they were paid to the receivers, and immediately returned to the banks to be lent out again and again, being mere instruments to transfer to speculators the most valuable public land, and pay the Government by a credit on the books of a bank. These credits on the books of some of the western banks were already beyond their immediate means of payment, and were rapidly increasing. Indeed, each speculation furnished means for another; for no sooner had one individual or company paid in the notes than they were immediately lent to another for a like purpose; and the banks were extending their business and their issues so largely as to alarm considerate men, and render it doubtful whether these bank credits, if allowed to accumulate, would be of the least value to the Government. The spirit of expansion and speculation was not confined to the deposit banks, but pervaded the whole multitude of banks throughout the Union, and was giving rise to new institutions to aggravate the evil." Such is General Jackson's own account of the first effect of his crusade against the United States Bank.

25. Independently of the obvious dangers of such a system of rash speculation, fed by imprudent advances

by irresponsible banks, as is here described, there were other and still more pressing reasons which rendered it peculiarly alarming to the democratic party in the United States. The Far West, as already observed, had hitherto been their main support, but by means of these banks a moneyed interest was arising in these, which would speedily by its influence win over to the commercial aristocracy the sturdy cultivators who were clearing its wilds, and by their increasing numbers determine the majority of the Congress. There was not a moment to lose—the next election might turn the majority in the House of Representatives the other way, and give the commercial aristocracy the command of the Union. In this crisis the measures of the President were characterised by his usual decision and recklessness of consequences. Of his own authority (July 11, 1836) as President he issued a treasury circular, prohibiting the receivers of the price of public lands from *taking anything but specie* in payment of lots sold, with the exception, to 15th December, of sales to actual settlers and occupants of the land. It is worthy of remark, that in the same official message which announced this determination, the revenue of the Union was stated at 47,691,000 dollars, of which 22,523,000 were drawn from customs, and 24,000,000 *from sales of land*, while its expenditure was only 22,000,000. Thus *more than half* of the public revenue was derived from the much-decried sales of lands supported by the banks; and it was from them, and them alone, that the funds were derived which paid off the whole public debt of the Union, at the same time the subject of just congratulation to the Government.

26. The effect of this decisive step on the part of the President of the United States was thus described by Mr Biddle, the President of the United States Bank: "The interior banks making no loans, and converting their Atlantic funds into specie, the debtors in the interior could make no remittances to the merchants of the Atlantic cities, who are thus thrown for support upon the banks of those cities at a

moment when they are unable to afford relief on account of this very abstraction of specie to the West. The creditor States not only receive no money, but their money is carried away to the debtor States, who in turn cannot use it either to pay old debts or to contract new. By this unnatural process the specie of New York and the other commercial cities is *piled up in the western States*—not circulated, not used, but *held as a defence against the Treasury*; and while the West cannot use it, the East is suffering from the want of it. The result is, that the commercial intercourse between the East and the West is almost suspended, and the few operations which are made are burdened with the most extravagant expense. In November 1836 the interest of money had risen to 24 per cent; merchants were struggling to preserve their credit by various sacrifices; and it cost six times as much to transmit funds from the West and the Southwest as it did in 1832, 1834, or 1835. Then, while the exchanges with all the world are in our favour—while Europe is alarmed and the Bank of England itself uneasy at the quantity of specie which we possess—we are suffering because, from mere mismanagement, the whole ballast of the currency is shifted from one side of the vessel to the other.”*

27. The effect of this state of things was to the very last degree disastrous in every part of the United States. The whole bullion of the country was withdrawn from the commercial cities on the coast, where it was essential to support the banks and regulate the exchanges, and thrown as Government deposits, to stagnate unemployed in the vaults of remote provincial banks. The gold and silver so abstracted from the great commercial cities found no channels for return; for when the western banks began to restrict their loans, the merchants in these parts were deprived of the means of making remittances; and the proceeds of the goods remitted to them, having been for the most part invested in the purchase of land, were now locked up in

the banks to meet the Treasury orders. Thus credit was destroyed, and transactions of all sorts were stopped alike in the cities on the coast and the forests in the interior. The banks, compelled to pay in specie by the existing law, could get none, and their only resource was sternly to refuse accommodation even to houses of the first respectability. Terror and distrust universally prevailed; the machine of society, like a huge mill turned by water which was suddenly frozen, came to a stand.

28. General Jackson retired from office, having served his time, in March 1837, and was succeeded by Mr Van Buren. He might boast with justice that he had inflicted, during his official career, an amount of ruin and misery on his country unparalleled in any other age or country. The catastrophe, inevitable from the circular of July 11, 1836, was for a short period kept off by the expedient adopted by the chief merchants and bankers in New York and Philadelphia, of drawing bills at twelve months on certain great houses in London and Liverpool which accepted them, and on which cash was raised in the mean time. But this expedient only postponed, it did not avert, the disaster; England itself, as will immediately appear, was involved in the consequences of the crusade against paper raised in the United States; the acceptors for the most part failed before the bills became due; and the crash set in with unexampled severity in March 1837. It first began in New Orleans, in consequence of the great transactions in cotton of that place with Great Britain, but rapidly spread to New York, Philadelphia, and the other cities on the coast, and the scene of confusion and panic which ensued baffles all description. A universal run took place upon the banks, which being in a great degree unprovided with cash, in consequence of its having been drained away to the banks in the West, were unable to meet the demand for specie. They all, including the United States Bank, accordingly soon suspended cash payments,

* Mr BIDDLE'S *Statement*, Jan. 13, 1837; *Ann. Reg.* 1837, 363.

and upon this the panic became universal, and the crash as widespread. Deprived of the wonted resource of discounted bills to meet their engagements, the greatest as well as the smallest houses in all the commercial cities became bankrupt. Two hundred and fifty houses stopped payment in New York in the first three weeks of April; and in Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and the other cities on the coast, the devastation was not less universal. Cotton fell from 14d. the lb. in 1835 to 7½d.; all other articles of export in a similar proportion. "Soon the distress spread like a pestilence through the various ramifications of society. Public works, railways, canals, were brought to a stand; the shipwright and builder dismissed their men, the manufacturer closed his doors; one sentiment pervaded all classes—the anticipation of universal ruin and individual beggary."

29. As usual in such cases, when the madness of a party has induced general ruin, the authors of the catastrophe strove to lay the blame of it upon their opponents, and were only the more confirmed in their resolution to persevere in their career, by the proof which had been afforded of its disastrous effects. The merchants of New York presented a petition to the President, praying him to retrace his steps, relax the laws as to the payment of the price of lands sold, and convolve Congress to consider what means could be devised to alleviate the public distress. They met only with a stern refusal. The calamities which prevailed were ascribed entirely to the mania of speculation and overtrading; the "mercantile aristocracy" were signalled as the authors of all the public misfortunes; and the deposit banks were charged with "base treachery and perfidy unparalleled in the history of the world, all purely with the view of gratifying Biddle and the Barings." At the same time, to since his determination to persist in the career of his predecessor, Van Buren issued a circular (May 15, 1837) to the different collectors of the revenue in the United States, to receive nothing but

specie, or notes of banks still paying in specie, in payment of revenue bonds or debts due to the States. But it was easier to issue such a circular than give the means of complying with it; and the public revenue, entirely dependent on the custom-house duties and the sale of the public lands, almost entirely disappeared. Within six months after the general suspension of cash payments, it was found that not more than five per cent of the sums due on the public debts had been paid to the collectors; the Government, without a revenue, were compelled to bring in a bill authorising them to appropriate 9,367,214 dollars lying in the Treasury—which, under the existing law of 23d June 1836, should have been distributed among the States—and give them Treasury bonds instead. Thus the first effect of General Jackson's crusade against the banks was to spread universal bankruptcy through the States, and convert the surplus of 24,000,000 dollars in the public revenue of preceding years into a deficit of above 9,000,000 dollars in this. So strong was the current of general opinion in consequence against the measures of Government, that in the next election of the provincial legislature of New York, instead of 94 Van Buren men to 34 Opposition, there were 27 of the former to 101 of the latter; and the same change was observable in Pennsylvania, Georgia, New Jersey, and many other States.

30. So strong was the sense, at least in the towns, of the ruinous effect of the crusade against the banks, that the elections in the next year ran generally against the Government, inasmuch that Van Buren's re-election to the office of President became doubtful. So utterly was Government bereaved of money, that they were reduced to the necessity of issuing Treasury bills to the amount of 10,000,000 dollars more, which was justified to the public upon the humiliating confession, that above 28,000,000 dollars was due to Government by State banks of deposit, and 15,000,000 by private banks and individuals, and that it could recover, no part of these

sums; a state of things, it is believed, unparalleled in any other age or country.* Notwithstanding all this, and though they themselves were the greatest sufferers from their own measures, the Government, trusting to a majority of ten in the House of Representatives, still clung with invincible tenacity to the measures of hostility to the banks, grounded avowedly on their jealousy of the weight and influence which these establishments, from their vast capital and liberal advances, had acquired in the country, and which threatened to wrest the sceptre of government from the republicans.†

31. The suspension of the crisis by the issue of the long-dated bills accepted by the English houses, proved, as already mentioned, only temporary. Such was the scarcity of specie, in consequence of its being locked up in the western banks, that the banks on the east were compelled to apply to England for assistance before they could resume cash payments; and the Bank of England, with praiseworthy liberality, in April 1838, remitted the United States Bank £1,000,000 in specie. This enabled them to resume cash payments, and recommence operations on a large scale, which soon restored credit, as all the other banks did the same. Their efforts were immediately directed to arrest the fall in the price of cotton, the great article of common export, which had fallen, in consequence of the measures of the Government, to 4d. a pound, being *not a third*

of what it had been three years before, and that although the last crop had been deficient rather than the reverse. For this purpose they made immenso advances on long-dated bills, drawn on and accepted by houses in England to the holders of cotton, to prevent their stock being forced into the English market at these ruinously low prices.‡ The operation, which was indispensable to arrest the ruin of the country, succeeded for a time, and prices of cotton rose considerably, in the first half of 1839; but, unhappily, the crash which ensued at that time in England utterly destroyed the means of carrying it forward. The Bank of England itself, as will immediately appear, nearly as hard pressed as the banks of America, was obliged, in the autumn of 1839, rapidly and rigidly to contract its advances; the houses which had accepted the long-dated bills became bankrupt; and the consequence was, that the crash came on again in America, after this vain attempt to arrest it, with more severity than ever. The United States Bank stopped payment, finally and irrecoverably, on the 5th October; all the other banks in the southern States of the Union suspended cash payments; and before the end of the year, nine-tenths of the whole commercial houses in America were bankrupt, and nearly the whole commercial wealth of the country was swept away.

32. So far the design of the democrats had been entirely successful; the

* "I submit to the consideration of Congress a statement prepared by the Secretary to the Treasury, by which it appears that the United States, with over 28,000,000 dollars in deposit with the States, and over 15,000,000 dollars due from individuals and banks, are, from the situation in which these funds are placed, in immediate danger of being unable to discharge with good faith and promptitude the various pecuniary obligations of the Government."—*President's Message*, April 5, 1838; *Ann. Reg.* 1838. 490.

† "The number of State banks and branches is now 829. The number of presidents, directors, and other officers, is not over-estimated at 8200. The number of holders of bank stock may be safely estimated at 320,000, and the number of debtors, exclusive of stockholders, at 65,000. The capital of all the banks is about 317,636,770 dollars, and the amount of their loans is 485,631,867 dollars. If the minor banks were to act in subservience to the monarch of the great banking system, on whom the inexorable laws of credit and of trade confer the power to crush or caress them according to his uncontrollable will, who could withstand them?"—*Address of Republican Members of Congress*, July 6, 1838; *Ann. Reg.* 1838, p. 491.

‡ PRICES OF COTTON.

	August 3, 1835.	August 3, 1838.	August 2, 1839.
Upland,	10d. to 1s. 4d.	5½d. to 7½d.	7½d. to 9d.
Sumts,	7d. to 8d.	4d. to 5½	4½d. to 6½d.

—TOOKE *On Prices*, ii. 401; iii. 59.

crusade against property had accomplished all for which it was intended. The banks were ruined; the "commercial aristocracy," the object of so much jealousy, was destroyed; all effectual resistance to democratic rule in the legislature was at an end. The little uninformed sturdy voters in the western States had now got the entire command of the country. Immense was the effect of this change upon the government and policy of America; the revolution was as great and irremediable as that of 1789 had been in France—that of 1832 in Great Britain. But at what price was this victory gained? At that of the national wealth, the national happiness, the national honour. Foreign commerce was almost destroyed; that with England was reduced to little more than a fourth of its former amount.* The embarrassment in the interior, from the failure of the customs and the diminished sales of the public lands, became so great that payment of public debts was impossible, since no legislator had ever ventured, up to that time, for general and national objects, to pronounce the words *direct taxation*. Thence the REPUDIATION OF STATE DEBTS, which, as will hereafter appear, became general in the United States, and has affixed a lasting and ineffaceable stain on the national honour, and on the character of the people for common honesty. Thence, too, has arisen a grasping disposition on the part of the ruling multitude, who sought in foreign conquest an escape from the consequences of domestic mismanagement, which has brought them into constant broils with their neighbours in every direction, and made "filibustering" abroad as common as repudiation of debts at home.†

* EXPORTS OF GREAT BRITAIN TO THE UNITED STATES FROM 1835 TO 1842.

1835, .	£10,568,459	1839, .	£8,839,204
1836, .	12,425,604	1840, .	5,283,020
1837, .	4,695,225	1841, .	7,098,842
1838, .	7,585,761	1842, .	3,528,807

—*Parl. Papers*, 27th May 1840, and 20th July 1848.

† "Our progress in prosperity has indeed been the wonder of the world, but this prosperity has done much to counteract the en-

Such have been the direct and immediate effects of the ascendancy of numbers over property, and the unchecked sway of the majority in the Government in the United States.

32. Connected with the United States by a traffic which had come to reach £12,000,000 a-year, it was impossible that Great Britain should not feel in the highest degree the consequences of

nobling influences of free institutions. The peculiar circumstances of the country and of our times have poured in upon us a torrent of wealth, and human nature has not been strong enough for the assault of such severe temptation. Prosperity has become dearer than freedom. Government is regarded more as a means of enriching the country than of securing private rights. We have become wedded to gain as our chief good. That under the predominance of this degrading passion, the higher virtues, the moral independence, the simplicity of manners, the stern uprightness, the self-reverence, the respect for man as man, which are the ornaments and safeguards of a republic, should wither and give place to selfish calculation and indulgence, to show and extravagance, to anxious, envious, discontented strivings, to wild adventure, and to the gambling spirit of speculation, will surprise no one who has studied human nature. The invasion of Texas by our citizens is a mournful comment on our national morality. Whether without some fiery trial, some signal prostration of our prosperity, we can rise to the force and self-denial of freemen, is a question not easily solved.

"There are other alarming views. A spirit of lawlessness pervades the community, which, if not repressed, threatens the dissolution of our present forms of society. Even in the old States, mobs are taking the government into their hands, and a profligate newspaper finds little difficulty in stirring up multitudes to violence. When we look at the parts of the country nearest to Texas, we see the arm of the law paralysed by the passions of the individual—men taking under their own protection the rights which it is the very office of government to secure. The citizen, wearing arms as means of defence, carries with him perpetual proofs of the weakness of the authorities under which he lives. The substitution of self-constituted tribunals for the regular course of justice, and the infliction of immediate punishment in the moment of popular frenzy, are symptoms of a people half reclaimed from barbarism. I know not that any civilised country on earth has exhibited during the last year a spectacle so atrocious as the burning of a coloured man, by a slow fire, in the neighbourhood of St Louis! and this infernal sacrifice was offered not by a few fiends selected from the whole country, but by a crowd gathered from a single spot."—Dr CHANNING to Mr CLAY, August 18, 1837.

this long-continued train of disasters, produced by the crusade of the democratic party against the banks in America. It produced effects, accordingly, of lasting importance on this side of the Atlantic, and which render an account of these Transatlantic proceedings a necessary prelude to the narrative of the great social changes ere long to commence in England. But independent of this cause of paramount importance and irresistible force, there were other causes tending to the same result in the British Islands, and which, acting upon the currency, the mainspring for good or for evil of the national fortunes, produced effects second only to those of the Reform Bill in consequence and durability. It is time to resume the narrative of these all-important events.

34. The first was the excess of imports over exports in Great Britain, in consequence of the continued prosperity and fine harvest of the three preceding years. It has been already mentioned, that in consequence of the uncommonly fine seasons from 1832 to 1835, the importation of grain had entirely disappeared, and the nation had become self-supporting. In addition to this, these years had been so prosperous from other causes already detailed, that a great balance of imports over exports had come to take place. This balance had come, in the year 1837, to be no less than £12,000,000; and a considerable part of it, of course, required to be paid in gold or silver.* This state of

things is the inevitable result of a prosperous course of years, and its inevitable consequence a great domestic consumption, acting upon a currency dependent upon the retention of gold. There must always, in such circumstances, be a great balance of imports over exports, and consequently, after the expiry of a few years of prosperity, a severe drain upon the metallic treasures of the country, and its invariable results—a contracted currency, fall of prices, and general distress. The sequence is as necessary and unavoidable as the succession of night to day. The reason is, that the amount of imports is determined by the consumption of the whole people; that of exports, by the labour of a small part of them only. When the people are prosperous, therefore, the imports must greatly exceed the exports.

35. The next circumstance which came to operate with decisive effect in increasing this balance of imports over exports, and swelling the drain upon the metallic treasures of the country, was the great and long-continued change which, commencing in 1836, took place during five succeeding years, in the seasons in the British Islands. Abundant in every respect, the harvests from 1832 to 1835 had been pre-eminently so in wheaten crops. It was hard to say whether the genial warmth and showers of spring, or the bright sun and protracted dry weather of autumn, had been most favourable to the produc-

* EXPORTS AND IMPORTS FROM 1837 TO 1842.

Years.	Imports Official Value	British and Irish Exports Declared Value.	Excess of Imports.
1837	£54,737,301	£42,069,245	£12,668,056
1838	61,268,320	50,060,970	11,207,350
1839	62,004,000	53,233,580	8,770,420
1840	67,432,964	51,406,480	16,026,534
1841	64,377,062	51,634,623	12,743,339
1842	65,204,729	47,381,023	17,823,706

—PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, 3d edit., p. 356.

It is true, the imports here are calculated according to the official, and the British and Irish exports according to the declared value, because the declared value of the imports was not given until 1854. But this only makes the difference less than it otherwise would have appeared. For a full statement of the principles upon which this table has been framed, and the limitations subject to which its results must be received, see the note to sec. 67, chap. xix., given at page 254 of vol. iii.

tion of that noble cereal crop. But it was very different with the seasons from 1836 to 1841. The rains of the autumn of 1836, excessive in Scotland and the north of England, first awakened the people of Great Britain from their fancied dream of peace and plenty. They were, in these latitudes, greater than had been known since the cold and calamitous season of 1816; and by a singular chance, the harvest in the south of England was in 1836 seriously injured by excessive drought, at the very time when that in the north was almost destroyed by incessant rains. The consequences were soon apparent. Prices rapidly rose during the succeeding winter; importation of wheat, which had almost entirely ceased, recommenced; and the average cost of a quarter, which in the preceding year had been 39s. 4d., rose to 48s. 6d.

36. The harvest of 1837, upon the whole, was not an unfavourable one, though the wetness in Scotland and the north of England, especially in spring, continued, and the crop in these grain districts was seriously injured, insomuch that the average prices of the succeeding year rose to 55s. 10d., and the importation steadily increased. But the next year (1838) was one, in an agricultural point of view, of almost unmitigated disaster. On the 6th January a violent snow-storm came on, followed by a tract of frost of two months' duration, and, for these Islands, uncommon severity. Even in the south of England the thermometer fell to 5° below zero of Fahrenheit: in Scotland it was at —10° and —12°.* Such extreme cold, if followed by corresponding warmth in summer, is by no means inconsistent, as the example of Upper Canada shows, with the raising of very fine cereal crops. But that is by no means the case in the British Islands: no burst of a Canadian spring succeeds the gloom of an arctic winter. On the contrary, the more severe and protracted the

* The Author frequently saw it at —5° in February 1838, at Possil House, near Glasgow.

winter, the colder and more ungenial in general is the spring, the more late and wet the harvest. So it proved in 1838. The rains of the summer and autumn of that year were incessant, and not, as in the two preceding, confined to Scotland and the north of England, but universal over the British Islands. The consequences were disastrous in the extreme; but what is very remarkable, more so to the manufacturing than the agricultural interests. The latter were compensated for a deficient harvest by an enhanced price; but to the former it was a source of unmitigated calamity. The connection between an unfavourable harvest, great importation of grain, and consequent export of the precious metals, had become apparent to all, and most of all to the mercantile classes. Men, especially in the commercial classes, became sensitive and nervous as the rains continued with unmitigated severity through the whole of autumn; and the merchants of London, Manchester, and Glasgow, coming to the front of the Royal Exchange, and looking up to the watery sky, exclaimed, "The Bank will break! the Bank will break!" *

37. In consequence of this incessant rain, prices of wheat rose to 78s. 4d. by the end of December, and reached 81s. 6d. in the first week of January 1839, being higher than they had been since 1816, and more than double what they had been three years before. Notwithstanding an immense and unprecedented importation, which, under the sliding-scale, was immediately thrown into the market at the lowest duty then paid, prices were sustained during the whole year; for the crop, on being thrashed out, proved worse than had been an-

* The Author saw, on the 31st December 1838, in the Carse of Falkirk, one of the finest agricultural districts of Scotland, men standing up to their knees in snow, mowing wheat with scythes, which they effected by shaving off the ears as they stood erect above the snow. It began to rain heavily in the beginning of August in that year, and, with the exception of the period of frost, it rained almost incessantly for seven months in Scotland.

anticipated, and the worst that had been known since 1816. The deficiency, as compared with the preceding year, was fully a fourth, with 1835 a third. The quantity of wheat required for food and seed in Great Britain was about 15,000,000 quarters; so that nearly 4,000,000 quarters required to be imported to supply the wants of the country, and at the present high prices they could not be got for less than £9,000,000 or £10,000,000. The spring of 1839, as is always the case after a severe winter, was extremely cold and backward, and the summer and autumn again deluged with rains, which rendered the harvest of that year nearly as deficient as that of 1838 had been. Thus, although, owing to the great rise of prices in the preceding years, a much greater breadth of land had been sown with grain than formerly, there was still a deficiency of wheaten crops in the British Islands of at least 2,000,000 quarters, which required to be supplied by importation. The average price of 1839 was 70s. 8d.; between the 5th August 1838 to the 3d August 1840, the quantity of wheat imported into Great Britain was 5,324,171 quarters;* and the cost of the grain

imported in 1838 and 1839 was about £10,000,000, nearly the whole of which was paid in gold.

38. The crops of 1840 and 1841 were not so deficient as those of the two preceding years had been, but still they were far from being of average amount, and the prices in consequence continued high, and the importation large. The average price of 1840 was 66s. 4d., and of 1841 64s. 4d.; indicating an improvement from the two disastrous years 1838 and 1839, but still by no means an average supply, or satisfactory state of things. The winter 1840-41 was again very severe, and the subsequent spring backward, and incessant rain fell in the autumn of both years. The quantity of wheat imported between 1st August 1840 and 1st August 1841 was 1,925,241 quarters; between the same period in 1841 and 1842, 2,900,000 quarters. The inspected market returns from 1st September 1841 to 1st September 1842, showed only 3,626,000 quarters brought to market; whereas the corresponding year after 1st September 1842 showed 5,000,000 so brought.† Thus the nation was on short supply to the extent of a half in both years, and of that supply, such as it was, a large propor-

* Viz.—From 5th August 1838 to end of that year,	Quarters. 1,827,088
In 1839,	2,712,555
In 1840, to 5th August,	784,528
	<hr/>
	5,324,171

—TOOKE *On Prices*, iv. 3.

The quantity of rain which fell in every part of Great Britain, in these two years, was fully double the usual amount. In the county of Lanark, the average quantity is 36 inches a-year; in 1838 it was 68 inches; in 1839, 66. The average in London and Edinburgh, and the east coast of the island generally, is 24 inches.

† The quantities of wheat imported from Ireland into Great Britain, in the under-mentioned years, were as follows, clearly showing how dependent the returns of cereal crops in that country are on dry seasons.—

			Quantity— Quarters	Prices. s. d.
From August 1, 1834 to August 1, 1835,			625,567	41 5
" 1835	" 1836,		705,593	42 8
" 1836	" 1837,		457,435	55 0
" 1837	" 1838,		590,842	57 10
" 1838	" 1839,		332,270	71 8
" 1839	" 1840,		174,650	68 0
" 1840	" 1841,		192,886	63 6
" 1841	" 1842,		216,204	63 4
" 1842	" 1843,		310,344	49 4
" 1843	" 1844,		467,800	53 9
" 1844	" 1845,		729,812	46 7

The price here given is the average price of the *harvest* year, commencing from the first week in August.

—TOOKE *On Prices*, iv. 35.

tion came from foreign parts! Notwithstanding the high prices, the quantity of wheat imported yearly from Ireland in three years, owing chiefly to the excessive rain, did not average 200,000 quarters—not more than a third of its average amount.

39. A most inadequate idea of the sufferings of the people, and consequent discontent, during the disastrous years from 1837 to 1841, will be formed, if the prices of grain, and especially wheat alone, are taken into consideration, compared with what they had been in preceding years since the peace of 1815. The immenso difference in price of every article of produce, and in consequence in wages, produced by the Act of 1819 restoring cash payments, must be taken into consideration if a true view of the real suffering endured is to be taken. That Act having lowered prices and wages fully 50 per cent, the rise of wheat to 80s. a-quarter was in reality as great a rise as one to 120s. would have been in the latter years of the war. Wheat had *doubled in price* during three years, while wages, so far from having kept pace with that advance, had, from the very same cause, *receded* nearly as much. Weavers, instead of 8d. a-day, were making only 4½d.; ordinary labourers, instead of 1s. 6d. a-day, only 1s. The shopkeepers and traders were in an equally wretched condition: their stock of goods was every day falling in value if it remained on their hands; their sales, if they made any, were daily at more reduced prices. Great as the suffering was among the agricultural labourers from the high prices, it was much greater among the manufacturing; for the price of their produce, instead of being raised, as that of the farmers was, by the long-continued scarcity, was every day diminished; and thus, while the price of the necessaries of life was nearly doubled, the wages by which they were to purchase them were nearly halved. This arose from the action of a large importation of grain, and other causes producing a great export of the precious metals, on the amount of the currency

in circulation, and the consequent price of every species of produce unaffected by real scarcity, which was so strikingly illustrated in these fearful years.

40. The circulation of the Bank of England in the middle of 1835 had been £18,500,000, its bullion £6,219,000, which rose in January 1836 to £7,076,000. The country bank circulation at the same period was £11,100,000, and in 1836, £12,200,000: in all, about £30,200,000; and with the Irish and Scotch banks, about £38,000,000. The first indications of a drain upon the Bank's coffers, and consequent monetary crisis, occurred in April 1836, when the joint-stock mania was at its height, and credit was high in this country; but the crusade of the President of the United States against the banks in that country, already described, had produced an extraordinary demand for specie on the other side of the Atlantic. ~~The~~ great, however, was the stock of gold and silver, owing to the entire cessation of the importation of foreign grain at that period in the British Islands, that this difficulty was soon surmounted; and the copious shipments of gold to the United States at that time averted the catastrophe there for more than a year. But in the succeeding years it could no longer be averted. The President's circular of 12th July 1836, requiring all purchases of public lands and payments to the Treasury to be made in specie, coupled with the deficient harvest of 1837 in the British Islands, and the still more deficient one of 1838 in them, and the great balance of imports over exports in the trade of Great Britain, arising from the prosperity of the two preceding years, then conspired to produce a drain upon the Bank's coffers which went on steadily increasing, till it brought that establishment, and with it the whole commercial world in Great Britain, to the very verge of insolvency. The stock of bullion in the Bank's coffers, which in April 1838 had been above £10,000,000, sank in the middle of October 1839 to £2,522,000; while its deposits, which in the former period

had been £11,262,000, were reduced in the latter to £6,734,000, and in December fell to £5,952,000 ! The Bank escaped bankruptcy by a loan of £2,000,000 from twelve of the principal bankers of Paris, which was only granted after much hesitation, and inquiries in this country of a very humiliating description. This crisis was the more remarkable that there was no *internal* pressure at the time ; on the contrary, the money paid in by the country bankers was greater than what was drawn out for domestic purposes. The *foreign* drain did the whole.*

41. The effect of this severe drain upon the metallic treasure of the Bank, of course, was to narrow the circulation of that establishment, which was reduced in the beginning of 1840 to £16,366,000, being not more than *two-thirds* of what it had been even after the terrible monetary crisis of December 1825. So completely had the suppression of small notes, which took effect in 1829, cramped the operations of that establishment, and fettered it

in the means which it formerly enjoyed of relieving the distresses of the country ! Of course, the effect of this contraction of issue by the Bank was to produce a corresponding reduction in the issues of the country bankers, causing a reduction of the paper circulation of England of above £2,000,000 in 1839, and nearly £4,000,000 in 1840, at the very time when nearly the whole coin in the country was drained away to America and the grain-growing states.† The effect of this, again, was a considerable rise in the rate of interest charged on discounts ; and no small sensation was excited on the Stock Exchange, on 20th June 1839, by an announcement from the directors of the Bank of England, that the rate of interest charged on the discount of bills was raised to 5½ per cent, being the first time it had passed the hitherto impassable line of 5 per cent. The rate was on 1st August raised to 6 per cent from 3½ per cent, which it had been a year before ; at which advanced rate it continued for above a year. The inconvenience arising from

* AVERAGES OF THREE MONTHS OF BANK OF ENGLAND, FROM 1838 TO 1840.

	Circulation.	Deposits.	Bullion.
1838.			
January 9,	£17,900,000	£10,992,000	£8,895,000
April 3,	18,987,000	11,262,000	10,126,000
July 24,	19,286,000	10,424,000	9,749,000
October 16,	19,359,000	9,327,000	9,437,000
1839.			
January 9,	18,201,000	10,315,000	9,336,000
April 2,	18,371,000	8,998,000	7,073,000
July 23,	18,049,000	7,955,000	8,785,000
October 15,	17,612,000	6,734,000	2,522,000
December 12,	16,782,000	5,952,000	2,887,000
1840.			
January 7,	16,366,000	7,136,000	3,454,000

—TOOKE *On Prices*, iii. 78.

† QUARTERLY AVERAGE OF NOTES OF BANK OF ENGLAND AND COUNTRY BANKS IN CIRCULATION.

Years.	Bank of England.	Country Banks.			Grand Total.
		Private Banks.	Joint Stock Banks.	Total.	
1837, Jan.	17,422,000	7,599,942	4,625,540	12,011,697	29,493,697
1838, Dec.	18,469,000	7,251,678	4,170,767	12,225,488	30,694,488
1839, Dec.	16,732,000	6,575,838	3,798,155	11,422,445	28,154,445
1840, Dec.	16,446,000	5,718,211	3,217,812	10,373,993	26,819,993
1841, Dec.	16,972,000			8,936,023	25,908,023

—PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, 3d edit., pp 432, 433.

this great advance in the interest paid for money, considerable as it is, and seriously as it diminished the profits of trade, is but a small part of the evils consequent upon such defensive measures, intended to effect a contraction of the currency. A far more serious and widespread evil is to be found in the sudden stoppage of credit and withdrawal of accommodation *altogether*, to all but the first class of traders; a state of things which at once renders a great proportion of the middle, and many of the highest class, insolvent, brings numerous bankrupt stocks into the market, checks speculation, and induces a great fall in the price of all articles of commerce. This fall is ruinous to the trading, and in the highest degree distressing to the labouring class, the more especially when it is accompanied, as it was at this time in the British Islands, with a great increase, from scarcity, in the price of the necessaries of life.

42. It is a curious proof how much more rapidly the truth in regard to the effects of political changes is discerned by practical men engaged in the real business of life, than by philosophers absorbed in the weaving of theories, or statesmen intrusted with the direction of affairs, that at the time when the legislature was clinging with invincible tenacity to a paper circulation which was to expand or contract according as gold flowed into or out of the country, and economists had pledged their credit on the marvellous assertion that the resumption of cash payments would not alter prices *more than three per cent*, and even that trifling alteration would be over in a few weeks,* the merchants, both in Great Britain and America, had come to regard with the utmost alarm the drain of gold from the Bank of Eng-

* "Unquestionably," said Mr Ricardo, "a most fearful and destructive depreciation had at one time taken place. But from that we had recovered, and he was happy to reflect that we had so far retraced our steps. We have nearly got home; and he hoped his right honourable friend (Sir R. Peel) would enable us to reach it in safety. He could venture to state that *in a very few weeks all alarm would be forgotten*; and at the end of the year we should all be surprised that any

land, occasioned by every serious deficiency in the grain crops of the former country. "During the last few years," says Mr Tooke, "a striking change has taken place in the degree of attention given to the effect of the seasons on the price of provisions. It is not now the farmer or the corn-dealer only who watches with painful anxiety the state of the weather, at the several critical periods in the growth of the different descriptions of produce, and from what he thus observes infers the probable range of prices and of his own fortune in the succeeding year; such anxious observation has been scarcely less common *in the counting-house and on the Stock Exchange* than on the farm and in the corn-market. Every passing cloud, indeed, may at those periods be said to have had some effect on the price of public securities, and of shares in railways and other joint-stock companies, in consequence of the apprehensions entertained of the unfavourable influence of high prices, and of large importations of corn, on the rate of interest, and on banking accommodation." So generally were these apprehensions entertained on the same subject on the other side of the Atlantic, and so strong the feeling of the dependence of the entire commercial world over the globe on the money market of England, that the President of the United States, in a message to Congress, lamented that the money power of London had become irresistible, and that the merchants of America, despite the obvious advantage to the industry of their country which would arise from a failure of the crops in England, contemplated it with dismay, from a sense of the effect it would have on the operations of the Bank of England, and the state of credit over the world.*

alarm at all had ever prevailed at the prospect of a variation of three per cent in the value of the circulating medium. His particular reason for supporting the measure under consideration was this, by withdrawing paper so as to restore the note to its bullion value—an alteration of only *three per cent*—all that is required will be done."—*Parl. Deb.* 1819.

* "The banks in the centre, to which the currency flows, and where it is required in payment of merchandise, hold the power of

43. It is not surprising that the merchants, both of Great Britain and America, watched with trembling anxiety the rains of August and September 1839 in the British Islands; for their consequences, under a currency in the heart of commercial circulation dependent on the retention of gold, were immense on both sides of the Atlantic. By stopping suddenly the credit given to the American houses by the London banks, it at once spread bankruptcy throughout the United States, occasioned the suspension of the United States Bank and all the other banks of America in the October of that year, and diffused general ruin over the whole of the trading classes in the country. The effects in Great Britain were not less calamitous, and from its being an old state, with complicated commercial relations, and without the boundless resources of the back settlements, they were there of much longer continuance,

controlling those in the regions whence it comes, while the latter possess no means of restraining them, so that the value of individual property, and the prosperity of trade, through the whole interior of the country, are made to depend on the good or bad management of the banking institutions in the cities on the seaboard. From this state of dependence we cannot escape. The same laws of trade which give to the banks in our principal towns power over the whole banking system of the United States, subject the former in their turn to the money power of Great Britain. This, it is not denied, was the cause of the suspension of the New York banks in 1837, and their present embarrassments have arisen from the same cause. London is the centre in which all the currents of trade unite; and it is rendered irresistible by the large debts contracted there by our merchants, our banks, and our States. The introduction of a new bank into the most distant of our villages, places the business of that village within the influence of the money power of England. The time is not long past when a deficiency of foreign crops was thought to afford a profitable market for the surplus of our industry, but now we wait with feverish anxiety the state of the English harvest, not so much from motives of commendable sympathy, but fearful lest its anticipated failure should narrow the field of credit there."—President VAN BUREN'S Message, Dec. 3, 1839; *Ann. Reg.* 1839, pp. 453, 455 (Public Documents).—What a picture of the effects, throughout the whole commercial world, of a currency in Great Britain dependent on the retention of gold, and so liable to be disturbed by every rain that falls!

and recovered from with more difficulty. The bankruptcies, which had been very frequent ever since the abolition of small notes, and consequent limitation of bank accommodation, in 1829, became fearfully numerous in 1839 and 1840—nearly double of what they had been five years before.* They increased in weight as much as in number in those disastrous years; for the houses engaged in the American trade, and which had accepted the bills in 1838, which for a year averted the ruinous effects of General Jackson's crusade against the banks in the United States, were among the greatest and most wealthy that ever had existed in Great Britain. The effects of the failure of these great houses, and of the universal contraction of credit from banks, were to the last degree calamitous in this country, and produced that universal fall of prices and widespread distress among the labouring poor, which could not fail to end in public convulsions or an entire change in the system of policy of government.

44. The shock given to commercial credit over the world by the run upon the Bank of England in 1838 and 1839, was felt nearly as severely in Belgium and France as in the United States or the commercial towns of England. In September 1838 the Bank of Belgium failed, which spread consternation and distrust over the whole of the Low Countries; and at the same time the panic was so great in Paris that Lafitte's bank with difficulty weathered the storm. The bankruptcies in France in those years told the same melancholy tale of widespread and consuming distress which those of Great Britain and America had done. The effect of these disasters, of course, was to extend the distrust and stagnation in Great Britain, and augment the number of those thrown out of employ-

* BANKRUPTCIES IN GREAT BRITAIN.

1834, . . .	1101	1838, . . .	978
1835, . . .	1082	1839, . . .	1293
1836, . . .	929	1840, . . .	1870
1837, . . .	1668	1841, . . .	1789

—*Ann. Reg.* (Public Documents for these years).

ment, as well as the profits or salaries of those still engaged in business.

45. These effects soon appeared in every imaginable way in the British Islands. Everywhere was told the same unvarying tale of bankruptcy, suffering, and want of employment. It is true, the poor-law returns, owing to the efforts made by the Poor-Law Commissioners to keep down charges, did not exhibit any great increase in these years; * although the considerable apparent decrease of £2,000,000, so much boasted of at first, was almost entirely owing to the extremely low prices of food in the years 1835 and 1836. But the number of paupers increased in a frightful progression, insomuch that in the year 1841 they amounted to 1,300,000 out of a population at that period not exceeding 16,000,000,—showing that more than ONE IN TWELVE of the whole population had become a recipient of public charity. At the same time, the paupers in Ireland were 2,285,000, and in Scotland, 85,000, making a total of 3,670,000 in the British Islands, or nearly a seventh part of the whole population, which at that time was about 27,000,000. The increase of crime in these years told a similar woeful tale of suffering in the labouring classes: the commit-

tals had swelled from 20,000 in England and Wales in 1833, to 31,000 in 1842.† It was no wonder that crime and pauperism were advancing with such rapid strides over the land, for the condition of the working classes had become miserable in the extreme. The wages of agricultural labour in Ireland were only 3½d. a-day; the weavers in England could earn no more; and the authentic record of what wages should be made up to in the rural districts of the south of England,‡ proves that they had fallen so low as to be inadequate to the support of a human being on the very lowest species of food. In fact, they were scarcely more than was at the same time earned by the ryots of Hindostan.

46. It was the incessant fall in the price of commodities of every sort which had now gone on, with only two periods of intermission of two years each, for twenty years, which was the cause of this universal and unheard-of distress. With the exception of the years 1824 and 1825, when the Small-Note Bill temporarily suspended the decline, and the years 1834 and 1835, when the Joint-Stock Banks Bill, and bill making Bank of England notes a legal tender save at the Bank of England, produced the

* EXPENDED ON THE POOR, AND PERSONS RELIEVED IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

Years.	Amount of Rates.	Indoor Relieved.	Outdoor Relieved.	Total.
1836	£4,717,630	..	..	..
1837	4,044,741	..	..	..
1838	4,120,604	..	..	..
1839	4,421,712	..	..	..
1840	4,576,965	169,232	1,030,297	1,199,529
1841	4,740,929	192,106	1,106,942	1,299,048

—PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, 90, 94, 8d edit.

† COMMITTED IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

Years.	Committals.	Years.	Committals.
1833, . . .	20,072	1838, . . .	28,094
1834, . . .	22,451	1839, . . .	24,443
1835, . . .	20,731	1840, . . .	27,187
1836, . . .	20,984	1841, . . .	27,760
1837, . . .	28,612	1842, . . .	31,302

—PORTER, 635, 8d edit.

‡ Scale of allowance to which farm-labourers' wages were to be made up by the magistrates of Dorset in 1830:—

When quartern loaf is at	12d.	11d.	10d.	9d.	8d.	7d.
Weekly wages,	3s. 1d.	2s. 10d.	2s. 7d.	2s. 4d.	2s. 1d.	1s. 10d.

—DOUBLEDAY'S *Life of Peel*, il. 50.

same effect, the whole period from 1819 to 1839 had been one of incessant fall of prices. The chief articles of commerce had declined in money value during that time 50 per cent, many much more.* Such a long-continued and prodigious fall of prices filled all classes living on the sale of commodities with despair. True, they bought everything cheaper, but what did this cheapness avail them when the wages of labour came down in a still greater proportion, when two millions of destitute paupers in Ireland were at every moment ready to inundate the labour market of England, and employment even on the lowest rates was often not to be had, from the discouragement to speculation of every kind which the continual fall of prices occasioned? The only thing which rendered this fall tolerable to the working classes in towns and the manufacturing districts, was the extremely low price of the necessaries of life which the magnificent harvests from 1832 to 1836 occasioned; but this reduced the agricultural classes to despair; and the table of the House of Commons groaned, during these years, under petitions which set forth with truth, that under existing prices cultivation of any kind could be carried on only at a loss.† And when the bad seasons began in 1837, and five cold and wet autumns in succession raised the cost of food, even of the humblest kind, again to the war rates, which were then felt as famine prices, a still more general and acute suffering was experienced by the manufacturers; for in proportion to the decline of their wages, from the contraction of the cur-

* The following most valuable Table of Prices was prepared with great care by Mr Taylor, and presented by him to the Commons Committee on Commercial Distress in 1848, and is to be found in their Report. The price of each article at the commencement is taken as the standard:—

Articles of Commerce.	Price.								
Wheat, per qr.,	£2	5	0	100	189	103	130	130	103
Barley, per qr.,	1	4	6	100	177	191	134	186	121
Oats, per qr., .	0	17	2	100	170	181	131	135	122
Beef, per tierce,	3	13	10	100	195	188	156	142	152
Pork, per barrel,	2	19	7	100	168	176	133	121	111
Cotton, per lb.,	0	1	2	100	119	105	57	37	49
Cotton yarn, per lb.	0	2	8	100	179	150	117	73	63
Indigo, per lb.,	0	0	11	100	110	106	97	88	55
Iron, per ton, .	5	18	0	100	151	151	148	115	96
Coal, per chal.,	0	19	11	100	202	190	156	139	124
Coffee, per cwt.,	4	9	5	100	123	88	124	59	88
Malt, per bushel,	0	3	0½	100	186	225	176	177	150
Flour, per sack,	1	17	3	100	214	223	155	162	137
Silk, per lb., .	1			100	106	111	90	80	76
Tea, per lb., Congou,	0	1	9	100	73	75	73	67	61
Tobacco, per lb.,	0	0	5½	100	204	352	161	104	109
Sugar, per cwt.,	1	9	8	100	139	181	107	93	104
Rum, per gallon,	0	3	1	100	179	185	106	103	100
Wine, per pipe,	22	7	4	100	223	274	228	221	231
Wool, per lb.,	0	0	10½	100	238	221	150	92	166
Spirits, per gallon	1	8	0	100	233	230	193	112	

—Commons' Report, 1848.

† COMPARATIVE FALL OF FOOD AND OF WAGES OF WEAVERS AND COMBERS, AND PRISONERS IN WAKEFIELD PRISON, IN THE UNDER-MENTIONED YEARS.

	1800.	1810.	1820	1830.	1840.	1842
Price of Wheat per qr.,	£5 18 10	£5 6 5	£3 7 10	£3 4 3	£3 6 4	£2 17 8
Weavers, per week,	0 15 0	0 16 0	0 16 0	0 16 0	0 8 0	0 6 0
Combers' wages,	1 1 0	0 19 0	0 19 0	1 0 0	0 9 0	0 6 0
No. of Prisoners in Wakefield Prison,	670	409	2160	2620	3565	4430

—Ann. Reg. 1842; DOUBLEDAY'S *Life of Peel*, ii. p. . ; M'CULLOCH'S *Com. Dic.*, edit. of 1860, p. 437.

rency and consequent commercial distress, was the rise in the cost of the necessaries of life from the badness of the seasons.

47. This unparalleled series of internal disasters produced a very important and lasting effect upon the administration of the new Poor-Law Act, and, through the suffering with which it was attended, ultimately upon the party in Great Britain intrusted with power. That this Act corrected many abuses which, in the course of ages, had crept into the administration of the English poor-laws, was certain; and a reduction of two millions, which took place in the two years immediately succeeding the passing of the Act, inspired general hopes that a remedy had at last been discovered for the growing evils of pauperism.* But, though not apparent on the face of the Act, or openly avowed by its supporters, there is no doubt that the intention of its authors was to go a great deal farther, and to put an end altogether to parochial relief, unless in such cases of extreme destitution or incapacity for labour as induced the applicants for relief to go into the workhouse rather than forego it. The "*workhouse test*" was the great discovery of the economists which was to distinguish real distress from that which was assumed, and bring down the burden of poor-rates at length to the lowest point consistent with the prevention of actual death by famine. This purpose, carefully concealed from the public, was not disguised in the private instructions of the commissioners to the boards of guardians.† With this view the regulation was made, that husband was to be separated from wife, parent from child; that the inmates of all workhouses should wear workhouse dresses; and the fare

* Lord Brougham, with more candour than discretion, avowed this secret feeling in the House of Lords in the debate on the Bill; for he said, "If something is not done to stop relief being given, your Lordships' estates will be swallowed up, and I myself, Lord Brougham, will become a Westmoreland pauper."—DOUBLEDAY'S *Life of Peel*, ii. 239.

† "We could not be understood as recommending the immediate abolition of the English poor-laws; we are simply desirous of

was to be regulated in such a manner as to be the most economical which was consistent with the support of life. Relief was to be sternly denied to all persons who declined to enter these gloomy abodes; and to render them capable of containing the multitudes who might be expected to apply for admission, huge union workhouses were erected in most places, called by the people "*bastiles*," the very sight of which, it was trusted, would deter any one from seeking admission.

48. Although the Poor-Law Commissioners appointed by Government were so deeply imbued with the principles of the economists that a steady prosecution of the ulterior objects of the bill might be anticipated from them, yet happily the immediate and local administration was intrusted to a different set of men, entitled "*Guardians of the Poor*," elected by the rate-payers, and still, for the most part, subject to the old influences. Hence there was a constant struggle going forward in every part of England between the Central Board and the local commissioners; and according as the former or the latter prevailed, the new Act was administered with more or less rigour, and dissatisfaction and complaint were more or less general. During the cheap years, and under the influence of the plentiful harvests of 1834 and 1835, these complaints were not very general; for the prosperity without diminished the number of applicants for relief, and the cheapness of food rendered the guardians less niggardly in its distribution. But when the bad harvests of 1838 and 1839 came on, and starving crowds were at the gates of the workhouses clamouring for admission, while wheat, whereon they were to be fed, was at 80s., it became utterly impossible to

stating the conclusions to which we have been led by the preceding evidence, that all poor-laws are in their essence impolitic and uncalled for, and that consequently their final abolition ought to be the ultimate object of any changes that may be made; an object, however, that cannot be attained without being preceded by several years' careful preparation for it.—E. CARLTON TUFFNELL, P. F. JOHNSTON, Commissioners."—*Poor-Law Commissioners' Reports*, App. A., Part ii.

carry out the instructions of the commissioners. At Nottingham the crowd of applicants was so great that no building could hold a fifth part of them, and outdoor relief or a serious riot was the only alternative. In Lancashire similar scenes occurred; and in all the manufacturing counties the pressure was so immense, that a general relaxation of the practice in regard to outdoor relief took place. In the succeeding year this relaxation became universal, insomuch that out of 1,199,529 paupers relieved in 1840, no less than 1,030,297 were outdoor ones; and the proportion has remained very nearly the same, though the numbers have been very much reduced, in subsequent years. A striking proof how vain are instructions of government commissioners when opposed to the stream of general feeling, and a sense of general necessity, and of the manner in which, in a free community, dangerous laws introduced by inexperienced men are quietly abrogated by the good sense of those intrusted with their administration.

49. The administration of the poor-laws was a subject too seriously affecting the great body of English labourers, not to rouse the anxious attention both of Parliament and the public press. Accordingly, so soon as the general distress began in 1837, the matter was brought before Parliament by Mr Walter, in a very powerful speech, which acquired additional currency from the advocacy of the *Times*, of which journal he was a leading proprietor, and the support of Mr Fielden, who seconded the motion, and brought to the aid of the cause unflinching courage, warm philanthropy, and unwearied industry. In the course of the debate, it appeared that the new Act had been adopted in 12,132 out of 13,433 parishes or townships of which England consisted, and that, especially in several of the southern parts of the island, a great reduction of rates had taken place; the rates in 4082 parishes, including 2,722,349 souls, having decreased from £2,189,000 to £1,187,000. On the other hand, it was proved, and indeed not denied, that very great op-

pression in individual cases had been committed, chiefly in refusing outdoor relief, and the wholesale removal of the poor from the parish where their application had been made, to that on which they were legally chargeable. In one instance, 217 of these unfortunate persons were seen packed in a single waggon! Ministers made the utmost opposition to any inquiry; but the public feeling was so strong, owing to the growing experience of evil with the advent of calamitous times, they were compelled to yield, and a committee was appointed to inquire into the working of the Poor-Law Amendment Act in every part of England, which shortly commenced its herculean labours. The Report of the Commissioners was lodged before the end of the year, and bore in substance that the operation of the new poor-law had been on the whole satisfactory, though many cases of individual or local hardship had occurred. The point was very anxiously debated at the time; but the subject has now lost much of its importance, in consequence of the compulsory practical repeal of the most obnoxious parts of the Act which took place during the severe distress of 1838 and 1839, and the consequent restoration of the system of outdoor relief, which it had been the great object of the Act to abolish. Since that time the paupers in England have been generally from 800,000 to 900,000, of whom five-sixths were supported by outdoor relief.*

50. It would have been well for the country if all the other social evils which arose out of the long-continued distress which pervaded the working classes from 1837 to 1842, had been as susceptible of practical abolition as those connected with the working of the new Poor-Law Act. But this was very far indeed from being the case; and out of the sufferings of that calamitous period arose three sets of evils, as widespread in their operation as

* In the year 1863, when Lancashire was suffering under the cotton famine, the paupers relieved were in England 1,142,624, besides 223,758 who emigrated from the United Kingdom.—See *Statistical Abstract*, No. xi. pp. 87, 90.

they were ruinous in their effects, and under some of which the empire has ever since that period, with few intermissions, continually laboured. These were Trades-Unions, Strikes, and Chartism in Great Britain, and Ribbonism in Ireland—maladies to the last degree in themselves calamitous, but still more serious as indicating a diseased and suffering state of the social body in which they arise.

51. Combinations are the natural resource of the weak against the strong, of the poor against the rich, the oppressed against the oppressors. As such they have been known in all countries and in all ages, and have often rendered important, sometimes beneficial, services to society. Their natural tendency, however, and in fact the condition of their existence, is to bring the great body of the combined persons under the guidance, which soon becomes the imperious domination, of a few ambitious leaders, who are generally as eminent from their talent as they are unscrupulous in their measures. Combinations among workmen, to prevent a reduction or effect a rise of their wages, had been known from a very early period in Great Britain, and many penal laws had been passed both in England and Scotland for their suppression; but it was not till the Act of 1819 had induced a general fall of prices, and consequently of wages, that they assumed a general and alarming character. In 1822 and 1823, however, in consequence of the rapid fall of wages, they became general in both parts of the island, and were organised in an occult and skilful manner on the model of the "secret societies," then so prevalent in France and Italy; and by the instigation of their leaders a great number of frightful crimes were committed, chiefly against workmen who ventured to work at lower wages than the chiefs of the combination had fixed on—such as assassination, fire-raising, throwing vitriol on the face, or the like,* which

* Between 1822 and 1825, great numbers of combination crimes, such as murder, fire-raising, throwing vitriol in the face or eyes, and the like, formed the subject of trial, and in many cases of conviction, in Glasgow.

filled society with consternation, and of which the better classes of the workmen themselves came, in their better moments, to be ashamed.

52. It was at first hoped that the repeal of the Combination Laws, by legalising strikes to raise or prevent the fall of wages, would put an end to these atrocious crimes at which humanity shudders; and there is reason to hope, from the experience of the last which have occurred in Great Britain, that these expectations may one day be in some degree realised. But in 1837 and 1838 this was very far from being the case. On the contrary, strikes at that period, without having lost anything of their violent and criminal character, had become more formidable, from the increased number engaged in them, and the acknowledged legality of their association. Conviction for crimes perpetrated for the purposes of the strike was always difficult, often impossible, even when numbers were witnesses of the crime, because they were perpetrated with the utmost precautions against discovery; and being in general directed against fellow-workmen, the intimidation with which they were accompanied was such, that even the sufferers under the violence could seldom be prevailed on to come forward as witnesses; and if they did, they endeavoured to escape future danger by declaring they could not identify the guilty parties. Add to this, that from the total want of police at that period in any place but the large towns, it was alike impossible in rural districts to give protection to the new hands, or obtain evidence against the perpetrators of violence when committed on their defenceless victims. Thus nine-tenths of combination crimes were committed with impunity: and such was the terror generally inspired by the extent of the associations, the number of the crimes they perpetrated, and the secrecy with which they were committed, that prosecutions were rarely attempted; and if begun, still more rarely successful: and even the public press, from motives of terror, ceased, except in very flagrant cases, to record their excesses.

53. At length matters were brought to a crisis by the conduct of the Cotton-Spinners' Association in the west of Scotland in 1837. A very serious strike had taken place of the calico-printers in that part of the country in 1834, attended with the usual amount of violence and intimidation; but though some persons had been brought to trial for these offences, it was found impossible to convict them of more than the minor offences, and they escaped with imprisonment only. Encouraged by this practical impunity, the great Cotton-Spinners' Association in Glasgow struck, to prevent a reduction of wages, in consequence of the commercial embarrassments arising from the crash in the United States in April 1837. Such was the extent of this association, which had its ramifications all over Scotland and the north of England, that during the last sixteen years 200,000 had passed through its hands. When it struck in spring 1837, the whole works of that description in Scotland were stopped, and above fifty thousand persons, including the families of the workers, were deprived of the means of subsistence. As the masters stood out firmly, the strike continued long, and at length the workmen and their families were reduced to the last degree of destitution and suffering. In this stage of the disease the usual aggravated symptoms appeared. Intimidation became general; menacing crowds paraded through the streets, and thronged round the gates of the manufactories where the new hands required to enter; and at length, after numerous acts of violence, and throwing fire-balls into several of the manufactories, which were happily extinguished before they ignited the buildings, a working man, one of the new hands, was shot in the back, and killed by one of the assassins in the employment of the association, in open day, in one of the public streets of Glasgow. Informed of this outrage, and having obtained information as to the numbers and place of meeting of the committee which regulated the proceedings of the association, the sheriff of Lanarkshire proceeded with a body of twenty po-

licemen, two nights after, and arrested the whole, sixteen in number, in a garret to which access was obtained by a trap-ladder in Gallowgate of that city. This was on a Saturday night, August 3. On the Monday following the strike was at an end, and all the mills in Glasgow were going: so entirely are these calamitous associations the result of terror inspired in the enslaved multitude by a few daring and unscrupulous leaders.

54. Five of the persons apprehended were afterwards indicted for illegal conspiracy and murder, and the evidence brought out at the trial unfolded in the clearest manner the thorough organisation, deep designs, and extreme danger of these trades-unions. It appeared, from the testimony of some of their own number, that when a strike had lasted a considerable time without producing the desired result of forcing the employers into submission, the workmen of the different factories engaged in it were summoned by the committee of the association to send delegates to a place of meeting to appoint a "*secret select committee*." Two were summoned from each factory, and at Glasgow at that period there were thirty-seven such establishments. The meaning and purpose of such a committee was perfectly understood by the whole association. It was to organise intimidation and violence, and, if necessary, assault, fire-raising, and murder. When the delegates assembled in the appointed place, each was directed to write on a slip of paper the persons whom he voted for to form the "*secret select*," which consisted in general of five persons, and give it folded up to the secretary. Having got the votes, the secretary immediately dissolved the meeting without announcing who had the majority, and thus the names were known only to himself. In the evening he called on the persons who had the majority of votes, and informed them in private that they had been elected. When the "*secret select*" was thus appointed, it commenced its operations, but with the utmost precautions against detection. Its meet-

ings were held sometimes in one place, sometimes in another, but always in secrecy, and none of its proceedings were committed to writing. When it was deemed expedient, for the purposes of the association, that an assault or a murder should be committed, an anonymous letter was sent to the person selected out of No. 61, the name appropriated to the loose daring characters who were ready to undertake any service, however desperate, for the sake of gain. He came accordingly to the appointed place, and was ushered into a dark room. He was there told by one of the members what he was to do, or who was to be assaulted or murdered, or in whose eyes vitriol was to be thrown, and when and where the crime was to be perpetrated. Upon his agreeing to undertake it, he was desired to put out his hands and take whatever he could reach, which was a sum of money. Thus all concerned could safely swear that nothing was given on the occasion. The committee charged itself with procuring the assassin the means of immediate emigration, which promise was in general faithfully performed. This done, he departed, and at the appointed time lay in wait for his victim. Thus was the crime planned, and the execution of it chosen—no one knew how, or by whom; and without the committee or their agent ever once seeing each other, the most effectual means were taken to secure the perpetration of the crime. The names of the secret select committee were known only to each other and the secretary of the association, with whom, from the consciousness of iniquity, they were deemed safe; and the mandates of this mysterious junta were obeyed by tens of thousands with a unanimity, and their measures looked forward to with an anxiety, unknown to the subjects of the most despotic sultan in the East.*

* "Every morning we asked each other why nothing was done last night. What did you mean by nothing being done?—*Why was no one murdered by the committee.*"—Murdoch's Evidence (a cotton-spinner); Swinton's Report of Cotton-Spinners' Trial, p. 80.

"I remember the shooting of John Graham.

55. The steps adopted by the association when these committee-men were brought to trial were singularly illustrative of the immense extent of the combination, and the resolution

I was a member of the select committee. Kean was the person who fired the shot. He was convicted, whipped, and banished. Orr made a claim on the committee, on the ground that he had been hired for £20, with Kean and Lafferty, to shoot Graham. He produced a witness who proved the hiring, and the Committee awarded the sum."—Murdoch's Evidence, *ibid.*, p. 67.

"June 15, 1837. — Moved at the general meeting by William Johnston, and unanimously carried, that the name of every nob (new hand) at present working, and the district he last worked in, should be enrolled in a book, and at the end of the strike, unless a change takes place, may be printed; but, at all events, the names of all who remained nobs at the end of the strike shall be printed and sent to all the spinning districts in Scotland, England, and Ireland; and that they remain nobs for ever, and a persecuting committee be appointed to persecute them to the uttermost."—Minutes of Cotton-Spinners' Association; Swinton's Report of the Trial.

The oath taken by the cotton-spinners who were fully initiated was in these terms: "I, A. B., do voluntarily swear, in the awful presence of Almighty God, and before these witnesses, that I will execute with zeal and alacrity, as far as in me lies, every task and injunction which the majority of my brethren shall impose upon me in furtherance of our common welfare—as the chastisement of nobs, the assassination of oppressors or tyrannical masters, or the demolition of shops that shall be deemed incorrigible; and also, that I will cheerfully contribute to the support of such of my brethren as shall lose their work in consequence of their exertions against tyranny, or renounce it in resistance to a reduction of wages; and I do farther swear that I will never divulge the above obligation, unless I shall have been duly authorised and appointed to administer the same to persons becoming members of our fraternity."—Evidence Combinations Committee, June 6, 1825.

In regard to the trial, Sir Edward Sugden, now Lord St Leonards, said, on February 13, 1838: "No case had ever been investigated with more attention; no advantage had been taken against the prisoners in any particular; while the atrocity of the proceedings was greater than that of which any single man could be guilty. A more atrocious case he could not conceive, and it showed more clearly that there was no crime which combination rising into conspiracy would not lead."—*Parl. Deb.*, February 13, 1838.

The system of hiring assassins to work out the purposes of a strike is not peculiar to Glasgow;—it is well known also in Manchester and Dublin. "Money," says Sir Charles Shaw, "is often voted in Manchester to con-

of its members to attain their unlawful ends by the most flagrant attempts to obstruct the course of justice. First, a printed placard was widely posted in every manufacturing town of Great Britain and Ireland, on the same day, denouncing the conduct of the sheriff of Lanarkshire in apprehending the committee as tyrannical in the highest degree, and calling on all the combined trades to co-operate in defeating the measure. Next, that magistrate was assailed with anonymous letters three or four times a-week, from the time of the apprehension till the trial came on, five months after, from all parts of Great Britain and Ireland, threatening him with instant death if the accused persons were not immediately liberated. The Crown witnesses, eleven in number, were so menaced that on their own petition they were committed to jail till the trial, and then sent out of the country at the public expense. At the trial, which lasted six days, the utmost efforts to disturb the course of justice were made. Five-and-twenty jurors were challenged by the prisoners, not one by the Crown. A crowd of two or three thousand unionists surrounded the court every evening when the trial was adjourned, which at length increased to such a degree that five thousand persons were assembled, and military assistance had to be sent for. Under these circumstances it was hardly to be expected that a verdict according to evidence could be obtained. The jury found the prisoners guilty of conspiracy, and they were sentenced to transportation,—but the murder not proven: a result which excited general dissatisfaction, as the evidence was thought to have warranted a general verdict of guilty. This was, two years after, followed by many members who have committed legal offences out of the country, in obedience to the commands of the ruling committee. The following are some of the entries: 'That £13, 4s. be allowed to ——— for passage-money to America after having murdered ———'; 'That £10 be given to ——— for outfit and passage-money to America after the murder of ———.'—SIR CHARLES SHAW'S *Replies to LORD ASHLEY'S Queries*, 1834, p. 17.

their being all liberated from confinement by Lord Normanby, then Home Secretary, in pursuance of his wholesale system of pardoning criminals, set on foot in Ireland.

56. It soon became evident, however, that this result was on the whole of a beneficial kind, and that the moral impression produced by the proceeding was enhanced by its having not been followed by the consequences which were generally anticipated. The *system* was slaughtered by the evidence adduced at the trial, and that is sometimes much better than executing the criminals on the scaffold. Men saw that the trades-unionists used daggers, though they suffered none. The moral effect, produced by this memorable trial was immense—greater, perhaps, than that of any other within the memory of man; and it was only increased by the generally felt inadequacy of the punishment. There were no moving scenes on the scaffold to lessen the abhorrence at proud turpitude. It led immediately to a committee on the Combination Laws in Parliament, which took a great deal of important evidence on the subject, and ended by recommending nothing; the usual result when a great social evil not immediately affecting the interests of any party is under consideration. But the effect of the disclosures made at the trial, in rousing public indignation against the organised atrocities of these trades-unions, has been great and lasting. Strikes, indeed, have continued, and been attended by open violence and intimidation, but no secret system of organised assassination has been again attempted. There have been no more "secret select" committees; on the contrary, though the leaders of strikes often forget to obey their own precepts, they always now set out with deprecating any violation of the law. In the cotton-spinners' trade, this strike led to the general adoption of the self-acting mules, which, by superseding almost entirely the need of the male operative, has ended these strikes in that particular branch of manufacture altogether.

57. They have continued, however, in other trades, particularly those of colliers and iron-miners; and there is no subject that, from its magnitude and distressing consequences, more loudly calls for the intervention of Government. Worse even than plague, pestilence, or famine, combinations among workmen are the greatest social evil which, in a manufacturing or mining community, afflicts society. These, bad as they often are, affect only the bodies of men; but strikes corrupt their minds. They utterly confound the ideas of right and wrong among immense numbers of the people, by arraying them in hostile bands against their fellow-men, induce a "bellum plusquam civile" in the heart of peaceful society; and in their later stages lead them anxiously to expect the perpetration of the most atrocious crimes for the attainment of what they consider their legitimate rights. They subject tens, sometimes hundreds of thousands of persons, innocent of any offence, and anxious only to earn a subsistence by honest industry for themselves and their families, to months of compulsory idleness and real destitution. They deprive them,

often for long periods, of occupation, as fatal to their minds as the loss of wages is to their bodies. They band them together in the beginning by the strong attraction of common hope, in the end by the hellish bond of committed wickedness. They subject the immense majority of quiet inoffensive persons to the tyrannical rule of a small minority of violent and ambitious men, who form a secret power, wielding an authority greater than even the triumvirate of Augustus, or the Committee of Public Salvation of Robespierre. Their evils do not terminate with the closing of the strife, and the resumption of labour by the combined workmen; they leave a long catalogue of ills behind them, and for years after the energies of the workmen are depressed by debt which they cannot discharge, idle habits which they cannot conquer, and crimes which they cannot expiate.*

58. Great as these evils are, and universally as they are felt in all the manufacturing and mining districts, after the occurrence of every monetary crisis, and consequent depression of wages, there are no causes of ruin in society which excite so little perman-

* The following Table, compiled by the sheriff of Lanarkshire from official sources, was laid before the Commons' Combination Committee in 1838, and exhibits a melancholy picture of the disastrous consequences of the mutations of the currency, and consequent combination and strikes in Glasgow, the great manufacturing emporium of the west of Scotland, for sixteen years before 1838:—

Years.	Population.	Serious Crimes tried by Jury.	Fever Patients in Royal Infirmary.	Deaths in whole City.	Rate of Mortality.	Rate of Crime to Population.
1822	151,440	98	229	3,690	1 to 41.00	1 to 1540
1823	156,170	114	269	4,647	1 .. 33.75	1 .. 1366
1824	161,190	118	523	4,670	1 .. 34.50	1 .. 1361
1825	166,280	160	897	4,898	1 .. 33.94	1 .. 1037
1826	171,600	188	926	4,538	1 .. 37.82	1 .. 909
1827	177,280	170	1084	5,136	1 .. 34.51	1 .. 1041
1828	183,150	212	1511	5,942	1 .. 30.82	1 .. 873
1829	189,270	239	865	5,452	1 .. 34.71	1 .. 790
1830	195,650	271	729	5,785	1 .. 37.78	1 .. 719
1831	202,450	238	1657	6,547	1 .. 30.91	1 .. 848
1832	209,230	272	1589	10,278†	1 .. 20.35	1 .. 768
1833	216,450	341	1288	6,632	1 .. 32.63	1 .. 693
1834	223,940	267	2003	6,728	1 .. 33.28	1 .. 823
1835	231,800	348	1859	7,849	1 .. 29.53	1 .. 726
1836	244,000	329	3125	9,143	1 .. 26.87	1 .. 741
1837	253,000	392	3860	10,838	1 .. 24.20	1 .. 645
1838	261,000	466	4071	11,421	1 .. 25.01	1 .. 590

† Cholera.

—Commons' Combinations Report, 1838, p. 578.

ent interest, or are so unlikely to be removed, either by the enactments of the legislature, or the unaided efforts of private individuals. The reason is, that the evils do not affect the *peculiar* interests of any influential body in the State, and that their removal *requires money*, from which all shrink. Government, in general, gives itself very little concern about such social contests, because they are not directed against itself, and do not, immediately at least, threaten the exchequer. They content themselves, therefore, with styling them "local disorders," the cognisance of which properly belongs to the magistrates on the spot, who are in general totally unprovided with any civil force adequate to arrest the evil. No religious party disquiets itself about them, because they do not involve any difference of creed, and spring only from divisions in regard to temporal interests. The landed proprietors carefully eschew any discussion on the subject, for they have an instinctive conviction that it will terminate in the pronouncing that odious word "assessment." The working classes cling to them as their palladium, their *Magna Charta*, and regard them as the only means within their power of making wages rise in proportion to the profits of trade and the requirements of their families. Even the masters employing the combined workmen are far from being always averse to strikes; on the contrary, they sometimes secretly encourage, generally largely profit by them. The cessation of production in any branch of trade, of course makes the value of the stock on hand more valuable, and it is often no small comfort to them, when a monetary crisis has occurred, and prices are generally falling, to see the value of their own article continually rising, while at the same time they are relieved from the disagreeable necessity, during a period of disaster, of paying their workmen wages.* Thus all classes, from differ-

ent motives, concur either in secretly encouraging or regarding with supreme indifference these disastrous combinations; and the moment one of them is over, all concerned hasten to banish them from their thoughts, until, like the cholera, the disease returns, after a stated period, to renew its devastations in a society totally unprepared to combat them.

59. What tends greatly to increase this strange indifference to the greatest social evil which afflicts society, is the opinion generally entertained that strikes are *always* unfortunate to the workmen, and therefore that their good sense or experience will lead to their discontinuance. This is a great mistake. In the great majority of instances strikes are *successful*; and it is the knowledge of this fact which renders them of such frequent recurrence. It is true, the world in general hears nothing except of those which are unfortunate, because it is for the interest of no one to publish those which are successful, and being soon over, they are as soon forgotten. But they are not forgotten by the workmen, who are encouraged by their frequent successes to try their strength with their masters, in circumstances entirely different, when they are sure to be defeated. The reason is, that they are successful when it is for the interest of the master to retain the men in his service, and unsuccessful when it is for his interest to get quit of them. With a rising market for the produce of their labour, no master will allow his workmen to remain idle as long as any profit remains to himself from their labour. With a falling one, he is too happy of a pretext to get quit of paying them their wages, for the produce of which existing prices will not yield a profit. Thus strikes are constantly successful when they take place with a rising market, and as uniformly unsuccessful when they are ventured upon with a

* During the great colliers' and iron-miners' strike in 1856, in Scotland, one coalmaster cleared £20,000 by a mass of

dross, which, before it began, was absolutely unsaleable, and another £25,000. And the price of coals, which during its continuance was 25s. a-ton, was only 12s. 6d. at its commencement.

falling; and it is because the workmen cannot be brought to see the difference of these situations that they occur so often, and, under circumstances evidently hopeless, are adhered to with such pertinacity. For the same reason, they may be expected to occur most frequently in a community in which, from the alternate expansions and contractions of the currency, prices frequently, and for a long period together, rise and fall, and are in truth the sad bequest of that system of monetary policy to the labouring classes of the community.

60. There is a very curious regulation general in all combinations among colliers and iron-miners, singularly characteristic of the levelling tendency of democratic institutions where they are fully developed. This is the "*Darg*," as it is technically called, or quantity of minerals which, *and no more*, each working man is allowed to put out. It is fixed at a very moderate amount—equal only to what *indifferent* workmen can accomplish in eight or ten hours' labour. The strongest and most active are not permitted to do more, and hence the best workmen are forcibly retained at the level of the inferior ones. Capable of earning 7s. 6d. a-day, they are constrained by the majority to limit themselves to 4s. or 5s., as the general rate of wages may be. If a regulation of this tyrannical nature were to be proposed by the masters, they would make the empire ring with it from side to side: but being established by themselves, it is submitted to without an open, though many a secret murmur; and as the majority of all bodies of men are indolent or inefficient, it is generally established and quietly acquiesced in. It is an instance of the tyranny of the *democracy of unskilled over the aristocracy of skilled labour*; and is the result of the same feeling which causes intellectual superiority, when not entirely subservient to the popular will, to be so generally the object of jealousy in democratic communities.

61. There is one way, and *one only*,

of preventing the terrible evils of these combinations, and that is, to be prepared for them. The whole reliance of their leaders is on intimidation and violence, which, always disavowed in the outset, is always practised in the end. Make no attempt to coerce or prevent such strikes by legal measures. Allow them full liberty of action so far as they themselves are concerned, but secure to others, who are not inclined to go into their measures, the same rights which they assert for their own body. Nothing can effect this but a strong and *previously established* civil force. No great or expensive establishment is required for this purpose; but one is absolutely required of a certain magnitude, and constantly ready for action. Military, admirable as a *reserve*, are not alone sufficient; it is a powerful *civil* force, capable of being directed at will by Government to the menaced district, which is required. Fifteen hundred or two thousand men, regularly drilled, and ready to be called out like firemen when the occasion requires, would be ample for this purpose; for, suddenly directed to the endangered district, they would, if supported by one or two regiments, amply suffice to prevent intimidation, and thereby cut short the strike which relies on such methods of gaining its points. The expense would not exceed £75,000 or £100,000 a-year—not a fifth part of that which every one of these disastrous struggles costs the community, independent altogether of the widespread suffering and fearful demoralisation which they invariably occasion.*

* At the moment in which these lines are written (28th May 1856), a strike of colliers and iron-miners in Lanarkshire, and the two adjoining counties of Linlithgow and Ayr, embracing 35,000 workmen, has continued above three months, kept 120,000 persons, including families, during all that time, in a state of penury and idleness, ~~and~~ cost Scotland at least £700,000! The strike of colliers in 1837, in Lanarkshire, cost the nation £400,000; that of the cotton-spinners, which led to the proceedings mentioned in the text, £230,000 in the same year! The strike of colliers in the same county, in 1842, lasted four months, and

62. Combinations among workmen, how great soever a social evil, do not necessarily lead to disaffection toward the Government; on the contrary, they often coexist with the strongest feelings of loyalty towards the sovereign. Being directed against the employers, not the constituted authorities, they may go on for some time without being merged in political discontent. But the transition is easy from the one to the other, the more especially as they both spring from the same cause—viz., the experience of suffering or disappointment, owing to change of prices, among the working classes. The machinery got up, and often so successfully worked, to effect a rise or prevent a reduction of wages, can by an easy transfer be directed against the Government; there can be a “secret select” to get quit of a sovereign, as well as to murder an obnoxious master or terrify a refractory fellow-workman. It is not surprising, therefore, that the same long-continued suffering which produced such formidable trades-unions in 1837 and 1838, should have led also to a serious political combination. Hence the rise of CHARTISM, which, in these melancholy years, spread its roots widely among the manufacturing and mining districts, and came at length to embrace nearly the whole working classes in these employments in every part of the country. Suffering was so general—it may be said universal—from the low rate of wages, the rigorous execution of the new

cost the nation at least £500,000; that of the same body, in 1848, nearly as much; and on the last occasion, the men struck because offered only 4s. a-day, and came in, after seven months’ idleness, at 2s. 9d. The great strike at Preston, in 1854, lasted thirty-seven weeks, involved 15,000 persons in misery, and occasioned an enormous loss. No one, not practically acquainted with these matters, can conceive the misery and demoralisation these long periods of idleness produce—the sad bequest of a currency dependent on the retention of gold, which, in the nature of things, cannot be always retained. Whenever the Author sees a serious drain of gold setting in on the Bank of England, he anticipates, at no distant period, a protracted strike; and he has never, during thirty years, been wrong in his predictions on that matter.

poor-law, and the numerous insolvencies among the employers, that the working classes were driven wellnigh to desperation, and led to lend a willing ear to those artful demagogues who represented it as entirely owing to the weight of taxes and the profligate expenditure of Government, and that the only remedy for it was to be found in the general emancipation of industry and reduction of burdens, by vesting the entire direction of affairs in the hands of the people. They did not propose to dethrone the sovereign, or openly establish a commonwealth: it was “a throne surrounded by republican institutions” which was the object of their desire. Their demands were reduced to six, styled the “Six Points of the Charter,” which became the watchword of the discontented in every part of the empire, and never ceased to agitate the country with more or less violence, till the hostility of the middle classes to those changes was clearly evinced during the general convulsion of 1848, and the cause of suffering and consequent discontent was removed by the huge banks of issue opened by Providence in California and Australia.

63. These Six Points, which became so well known in English history, were—1st, Universal Suffrage; 2d, Vote by Ballot; 3d, Paid Representatives in Parliament; 4th, Equal Electoral Districts; 5th, The Abolition of a Property Qualification; 6th, Annual Parliaments. These principles were not new in social history; they were nothing but a brief summary of those which had recently desolated France and Spain, and from the first dawn of civilisation had been more or less contended for wherever freedom had spread its roots. But the universal distress of the working classes rendered their reception much more easy and general at this time than they had ever before been in English history. Suffering led to its natural result, general discontent. So general did this ill-humour become, that an organisation of Chartists took place over the whole manufacturing cities of the empire, for the purpose of

electing deputies, who were to represent the whole body in a national convention, which was to sit in London, and which would soon, it was hoped, come to supersede the legitimate Parliament. An enormous petition, professing to be signed by 1,200,000 Chartists, and certainly bearing that number of names, was presented to the House of Commons, by Mr Attwood, on 14th June 1839. But from the truth obtained, ten years afterwards, of the way in which petitions of that description were got up, and false signatures appended to them, to be hereafter detailed, it may be doubted whether the real signatures ever amounted to half the number.

64. Although the Chartists professed, and really desired, great political as well as social changes, yet the former were considered by them only a step to the latter. The movement was essentially social, and it was directed rather against the capitalists than the Government. As such it merits very particular attention, for it was the first indication which appeared in this country of the SOCIALIST AGITATION which, ten years after, overturned the Government of Louis Philippe, and worked such important effects on the monarchy of France. The object of the Chartists was, at bottom, to obtain a new distribution of the profits of manufacturing or mining industry. The movement did not extend to the agricultural districts, and the rural population remained from first to last almost entire strangers to it. Their real hostility was against the capitalists, whom they regarded as a middleman, interposed between them and the purchasers of the produce of their industry, and who succeeded in realising enormous profits at their expense. The profits of stock they regarded as an unjust and improper deduction from the remuneration of industry, which should extend to the whole price of its produce, under deduction only of the cost of the raw material. On these principles they kept studiously aloof from the movement which, from the excessively high price of provisions, had begun against

the Corn Laws, holding that any reduction in the price of the necessaries of life would turn to the profit of the masters, by occasioning a proportional or even greater fall in the wages of labour.

65. The Chartist agitation first became formidable in the latter months of 1838, when the high price of provisions, coupled with the low wages of labour, had rendered suffering of the severest kind almost universal among the manufacturing classes, and the strict execution of the new poor-law put the relief afforded from the public funds under restrictions to which they were not willing to submit. So extensive did the discontent then become, that Government held Mr Stephens, one of their leaders, to bail on a charge of sedition; but this step, instead of checking the movement, only rendered it more violent and widespread. Meetings were held at the principal manufacturing towns, at which language the most violent was indulged in by the orators, among whom Messrs Oastler and Feargus O'Connor stood forth as conspicuous. Mr Attwood, on the 15th July 1839, moved that the petition should be referred to a select committee, but the motion was negatived by a majority of 281 to 189. The agitation only became the greater on this event; for the orators had now the just and popular topic to dwell upon, that the Legislature had refused even to take their grievances into consideration. At a great meeting held on Kersal Moor, near Manchester, 200,000 persons are said to have been assembled; and although the numbers were doubtless very much exaggerated, yet there was certainly such an array as had not been seen in that vicinity since the famous Peterloo assemblage in 1817, already recounted.

66. However much the leaders of a movement of this description may wish to keep it free from popular violence, and thereby shun the risk of alienating the shopkeepers and middle classes, it has never been found practicable to continue for any length of time in this rational and measured course. Sooner

or later the aroused passions of the multitude impel them into deeds of violence, and the cause itself is brought into general discredit from the atrocities to which it has been found to lead. This truth—of which examples are perpetually recurring and forgotten—was strikingly exemplified on the present occasion. The Chartist violence of 1839 was of the most alarming description. In April there was a serious riot in Devizes, in consequence of an intrusion of a thousand Chartists, armed with bludgeons, into the marketplace of that town, to hold a public meeting. This was followed by a still more violent outbreak in Birmingham, on the 4th, and again in the middle of July. A crowd had there assembled on a piece of open ground called Holloway Head, in expectation of hearing Mr Attwood address them; but in this they were disappointed, as he did not make his appearance. Several orators recommended them, upon this, to form in line, and parade the streets in an orderly manner. Instead of doing so, they broke into small parties, which ere long united in the Bullring, the chief open place of the city, from whence they proceeded down Moor Street, and made an attack on the police-office there. Though a body of police were in the inner yard of the building, yet as there was no magistrate at hand to head them, and they were forbidden to act without orders, they did not move; and the mob were permitted to break the whole windows of the building without resistance. Emboldened by this impunity, the crowd, now swelled to several thousand persons, proceeded back to the Bullring, where they commenced a violent attack upon houses and property of every description. No sort of weapon came amiss to the infuriated multitude: "Furor arma ministrat." Broken flagstaffs, heavy bludgeons, old scythes, paling-stobs, iron rails torn up, ~~and~~ instantly put into requisition; and with these, amidst loud yells, they commenced an attack upon the wealthiest and most respectable houses in the Square. The whole furniture and effects they contained were

carried into the centre of the Square, and there set fire to, in a huge pile, amidst the cries and howlings of demons. Not content with this, they carried back the burning materials to the houses, to commence a general conflagration, and two were soon in flames. Besides those consumed by fire, twenty houses or shops were utterly gutted and destroyed in little more than an hour, when the Chartists were masters of the Square. At length a body of police, followed by a party of three hundred of the rifles, and a troop of the 4th dragoons under Colonel Chatterton, made their appearance, and were received with loud cheers by the respectable inhabitants. The Chartists immediately fled; and several attempts to reassemble next day were defeated by the energetic conduct of Colonel Chatterton and the military, as well as the civic authorities, now fully aroused to a sense of their danger.

67. When this alarming outbreak came to be discussed in Parliament, the Duke of Wellington said in the House of Lords, that "he had seen as much of war as most men; but he had never seen a town carried by assault, subjected to such violence as Birmingham had been during an hour by its own inhabitants." This statement, coming from the general who had seen what followed the assault of Badajoz and St Sebastian, made a very great impression; and the middle classes everywhere saw the necessity of rallying round the magistrates and civic authorities, if they would avoid the fate of the Bullring. Chartist assemblages, accordingly, held at Clerkenwell in London, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Manchester, Stockport, and other places, were vigorously met by the now thoroughly alarmed authorities, and dispersed with more or less violence. There is seldom any great difficulty in preserving the public peace when the magistrates are sure of being supported by the Government. It is timidity in high places which leads to audacity in low. So general was the impression produced by this outbreak, and the reaction against Chartist violence by

which it was followed, that the Attorney-General did not hesitate to say publicly that "Chartism was extinct, and would never again be revived."

68. The event soon proved, however, that this exalted functionary was mistaken in his expectation, and that political maladies, arising, like Chartism, out of long-continued and widespread suffering, are not to be extirpated by the mere failure of the external eruptions to which they have given rise. Among the many improper persons whom the zeal of their Liberal supporters had in many places forced upon the Government, one of the most improper was Mr John Frost, a linendraper at Newport, who had been made a justice of peace for the borough of Newport in entire ignorance of his real character. When the Chartist agitation began, in the autumn of 1838, he had made a very violent and dangerous speech in that town, for which he was immediately called to account, with great propriety, by Lord John Russell, as Home Secretary, and narrowly escaped being at once removed from the magistracy. This leniency afterwards proved to have been entirely thrown away: so far from being induced to halt in his career by the indulgence shown to his first transgression, Frost seems to have only regarded it as a symptom of fear on the part of Government, which rendered it safe for him to advance in it. A plan was laid in profound secrecy between Frost himself, Williams, who kept a beer-shop at Coalbrookdale, and Jones, a watchmaker in Pontypool. Each of these persons was to command a division of insurgents, who were to unite at Risca, at dead of night on 3d November, and march into Newport, when the military were to be surrounded and made prisoners, the bridge over the Usk broken down, and rockets sent up from the adjoining hills to rouse the country. It was agreed with their confederates at Birmingham, that the non-arrival of the mail within an hour and a half of its customary time should be considered as a signal that the insurrection had succeeded at Newport, which was to be immediately followed by a general rising at Birmingham and

in all the northern counties, and proclamation of the Charter as the law of the land.

69. With whatever caution the secret of these arrangements had been preserved, it was impossible that the requisite orders could be given to ten or twelve thousand men to assemble in hostile array, without some intelligence on the subject reaching the magistrates of the district. Those of Newport did their duty on this occasion with a prudence and courage which may serve as a model to civic authorities on all similar occasions. They did the one thing needful on such occasions—they looked the danger boldly in the face, and made preparations against it *before* it came. The mayor, Mr Phillips, with the chief magistrates, took post in the principal inn, called the Westgate Hotel; and as soon as it was ascertained that the Chartists were marching on the town, an application was made to a body of military in the neighbourhood, and thirty men under Lieut. Grey were obtained, and posted in the hotel. Meanwhile Frost arrived at the point of junction, and finding that the other divisions had not yet arrived, he set out with his own, 5000 strong, partially armed with muskets, and arrived in Newport. He then made straight for the Westgate Hotel, and summoned the special constables at its door to surrender. This being refused, an attack was made upon them. The door was quickly forced open with crowbars and hatchets, and the tumultuous crowd burst, with loud cheers, into the lobby. But meanwhile the magistrates and military in the floor above were not idle. Mr Phillips and Lieut. Grey each opened a shutter of the lower window which looked upon the street, which was immediately followed by a shower of balls from the Chartists below, by which the former and several other persons were wounded. But never did the superiority of courage and discipline appear more clearly than on this occasion. The soldiers, admirably directed, opened a continued and sustained fire both upon the insurgents without and those in the lobby within, and with such effect that, after a few rounds,

during which twenty fell, the whole broke and fled. Frost himself was not seen on the theatre of conflict, but he was arrested in Newport that evening, as were Jones and Williams, who had arrived ten minutes too late at the point of rendezvous. These three persons were afterwards indicted for high treason, and found guilty; but their lives were spared, though with great difficulty, by the leniency of the Crown, in consequence of a technical legal difficulty on which the judges were divided. Mr Phillips, who recovered from his wound, was with great propriety knighted by the Queen for his gallantry on the occasion. Every right-thinking man must rejoice at the honour thus worthily bestowed; for what said Napoleon?—"There is one death more glorious than that of a soldier on the field of battle; it is that of a magistrate on the threshold of the hall of justice in defence of the law."*

70. This decided defeat suppressed for a time any similar Chartist outbreaks, though it was far from putting an end to the profound feelings of discontent in which it originated, and which broke out, three years after, in alarming strikes and combination riots amounting to insurrection, both in England and Scotland. But meanwhile another movement was commencing under wiser directions, and supported by greater wealth, which was not destined to be of such ephemeral duration, and which, springing up from small beginnings, ere long acquired such consistency and strength as enabled it to modify, in a most important respect, the commercial policy of the country. On the 18th September 1838, a public dinner was given to Mr Bowring, whose labours in behalf of an unrestrained commercial intercourse among nations had long attract-

* Frost was, after his transportation, restored to Great Britain by the general amnesty passed on occasion of the glorious peace with Russia in 1856. The first use he made of his liberty, on his release, was to make a decided, though happily abortive, attempt to renew the Chartist agitation in London; a proceeding on his part which both demonstrated how righteous had been his previous sentence, and undeserved the lenity which led to its relaxation.

ed attention, at Manchester, which was attended by only sixty persons. Though so few in number, they were united in conviction and resolute in spirit, and they at once formed themselves into a society for promoting the principles of Free Trade. They commenced operations in the most business-like way, and soon showed that they well knew how the foundations of a great national superstructure are to be laid. They opened subscription-lists, when large sums were put down by the leading firms, obtained the sanction of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, and recommended the formation of similar societies in all the great manufacturing towns of the kingdom. With such success were their efforts attended, that, before February 1839, associations of the same sort were established in London, Birmingham, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, and other great towns, which soon became connected together, and formed a great association for establishing the principles of Free Trade, especially in grain. Such was the origin of the ANTI-CORN-LAW LEAGUE, which gradually drew to itself nearly all the commercial and manufacturing industry of the country, and worked such wonders in the modifications of its future policy.

71. The reason of this rapid progress, as of success in all similar changes, is to be found in the fact that as the Anti-Corn-Law League proposed to rectify the great existing evil generally felt, so it originated in the experience of suffering universally diffused. It sprang from the same source as the Chartist agitation among the operative masses. Both arose from the ruinous effects of the fall of prices produced by the contraction of the currency necessarily induced under the existing system by the bad seasons, and each was intended to throw the effects of that fall off themselves and upon their neighbours. The Chartists proposed to do this by establishing a frame of government which, by giving them, through the force of numbers, the command of the State, should enable

them to abolish the entire class of employers and capitalists, and to divide, on the Communist principle, the whole profits of stock among those engaged in labour. The Anti-Corn-Law League proposed to extricate the masters out of the difficulty arising from the fall of prices by diminishing the price of food, without any regard to the effect of such reduction upon those engaged in its production, and thus effecting a considerable diminution in the cost of the production of manufactured articles. Both parties felt the pressure, and each, after the usual fashion of human nature, proposed to ease itself by throwing it upon its neighbour. And neither saw, what the event ere long proved, and what was clearly demonstrated in 1852 and 1853, that the existing evil was entirely artificial, and of human creation, and that without tearing society to pieces by rousing the antagonism of class against class, the whole existing evils might have been remedied by the simple expedient of arresting the fall of prices by the establishment of a currency not liable to be drawn away, and adequate to the increasing wants of the nation.

72. Mr RICHARD COBDEN was the leader of the movement in the country, Mr Villiers, the member for Wolverhampton, in the House of Commons. Both were men of vigour and capacity, and eminently fitted for the task they had undertaken. Possessed of strong good-sense and powerful natural talents, Mr Cobden had none of the general views of systematic caution which arises from an enlarged acquaintance with human affairs, and the habit of reflecting on their varied and complicated interests. He saw one great evil before his face, which was the fall in the price of manufactured articles, and he saw only one remedy for it, which was to effect a corresponding reduction in the cost of their production. This could only be done by cheapening the price of subsistence, and so reducing the wages of labour; and to this object all his efforts accordingly were directed. He

was sure of a willing audience wherever he went; cheap bread is a cry to which the working classes, especially when really suffering, are never insensible. The ultimate effect of cheap bread in inducing cheap wages is a remote consequence, to which comparatively few are alive. Cobden was a powerful political fanatic. He pursued his favourite *single idea* of free trade in corn with the same sincerity and vigour with which Mr O'Connell at the same time was pursuing his chimera of the repeal of the Union, or with which he himself afterwards advocated the disbanding our troops, and selling our ships of the line, and crumpling up Russia like a sheet of paper in his hand. To produce a great public movement, a cry must be *simple and single*—complication or multiplicity are alike fatal to any general excitement. If the Chartists had had one point in their Charter instead of six, the fate of their movement might have been widely different from what it actually was.

73. Connected with these great political agitations, and, though far less important in its consequences, not less characteristic of the temper of the times, a movement took place at this time in Scotland, which has been attended with lasting effects upon the ecclesiastical establishment of that country, and, on account of its singularity, merits a brief notice even in general history. It originated in the passion for independence, and chafing against control, which are in so remarkable a manner inherent in the Scotch character, and which have at different periods produced the most important results in British history. In the fourteenth century it inflicted the most severe defeat upon the arms of England which they ever sustained, and prolonged for three centuries the national independence; in the seventeenth century it gave victory to the English Parliament when its forces were yielding to the increasing vigour of the Royalists; and in the nineteenth it secured the triumph of the same party in working out the

Reform Bill, and has retained the Liberal party in power, for twenty years, after the majority of the constituencies in England and Wales had decided for the other side. Whether from their remote situation, or the secluded nature of their country, or the character of original descent, the Scotch are singularly tenacious of old ideas; and the principles of the Solemn League and Covenant were as rife in their hills and moors at this time as when, two centuries before, they marched to the support of the sinking English Puritans at Marston Moor.

74. Among a people of such a character, and so situated, it was not to be expected that the many causes which had produced such a ferment in southern Britain should fail in occasioning a serious convulsion. But following the direction of the national temperament, which is eminently, and in a most remarkable manner, prone to theological disputes, the general fervour fastened not upon the State, but the Church, as the theatre for the exercise of its powers. Independence of all temporal authority in spiritual concerns became as general a passion as national independence had been in the days of Wallace and Bruce. Though it was the Church, not the State, which was split asunder, the movement was democratic, not religious. It was not a contest for doctrine, principle, or form of worship, but for the appointment of the clergy. The existing law had vested the right of nomination in the patrons of parishes, but a large portion of the Presbyterians held it should be intrusted to a majority of the congregations in communion with the Church. The General Assembly of the Church, in conformity with early precedent, and yielding to the prevailing fervour of the times, had in 1834 passed an Act, well known under the name of the Veto Act, which empowered presbyteries to refuse to sanction the appointment of ministers who were disapproved of by a majority of the heads of families in the respective congregations. As this

Act practically took the appointment out of the hands of the patrons, it was made the subject of legal trial in the noted case of Auchterarder; and the Court of Session and House of Peers successively decided in favour of the patron, thereby nullifying the ecclesiastical Veto Act of 1834. Upon this, Dr Chalmers brought forward, in May 1839, a motion in the General Assembly of the Church, which, while it enjoined obedience to the decrees of the courts of law, so far as the civil rights of patrons are concerned, asserted in the most express terms the principle of *Non-Intrusion*, as it was called, or the right of the majority of parishioners to put a *veto* upon the appointment of any minister who was displeasing to them.* This resolution was carried by a majority of 36, the numbers being 197 to 161. As the effect of this resolution was to put the Church, in religious rights, directly at variance with the declared law of the land, it could not fail to lead to a schism. Lord Dalhousie said, "I shall not again consent to sit in any Church which, gloss it as you may, has resolved doggedly, but virtually, to set at defiance the law of the land. The knell is now rung of the Establishment of the Church of Scotland." It was followed, accordingly, by a secession of about two-thirds of the clergy of the Established Church from their cures, and the establishment of a vast dissenting church in every part of the country, which ere long came to number seven hundred congregations in its bosom.

75. The effects of this great schism, as of most similar movements which originate in the wants and are supported by the feelings of a large portion of the people, have been partly

* "And whereas the principle of non-intrusion is now coeval with the reformed Kirk of Scotland, and forms an integral part of its constitution embodied in its standards, and declared in various Acts of Assembly, the General Assembly resolved that this principle cannot be abandoned, and that no presentee should be forced upon any parish contrary to the will of the congregation."—*Dr CHALMERS'S Resolution, May 22, 1839; Ann. Reg. 1839, p. 302.*

beneficial, partly injurious. On the one hand, it has led to the establishment of a new or additional church, maintained entirely by voluntary contributions, and which, like all similar voluntary establishments, in the first instance at least, has been supported with uncommon liberality on the part of the congregations, and adorned by a splendid array of oratorical ability on the part of the pastors. In a community where manufacturing and mining undertakings, on a very extended scale, have congregated the working classes in huge and neglected masses in particular localities, there can be no doubt that this has proved in many cases a very great benefit; and it may be doubted whether any old establishment, or anything but the fervour of an infant voluntary church, could have effected it. It has adorned our cities with splendid structures, and in many places brought to the destitute and debased portion of our people the light of Christian faith. On the other hand, it has induced many evils nearly as formidable—some, it is to be feared, still more lasting. It has brought to an unparalleled degree the bitterness of sectarian division into private life; divided brother against sister, father against child; turned charity itself, the bond of peace, into party channels; starved down the great establishments which, without any distinction of creed, look only to the alleviation of human suffering; rendered a poor-law universal and unavoidable from the absorption of a large portion of the funds of charity in the support of a new ecclesiastical establishment,* dif-

* The subscriptions to the Glasgow Infirmary, which is open to the sick and infirm of all nations and creeds, are now (1856) less than they were forty years ago, when the city had not a fourth of its present inhabitants, or a tenth of its present wealth. Nearly all the catholic (not Roman Catholic) charitable establishments are labouring under similar difficulties; while the poor-rate, then unknown, or a mere trifle, now amounts to £80,000 a-year, and was £120,000 in 1819. On the other hand, £130,000 has, within the last six years, been expended in building Free kirks in that city, and its ministers are as numerous, and have larger congregations, than the Established Church, and are nearly as comfortable.

fering from the former in no respect except in the parties in whom the voice of the minister is vested, and its being supported entirely by voluntary contributions drawn chiefly from the working classes. But whichever of these opposite sets of considerations may be deemed to preponderate, there can be but one feeling, and that of unmixed admiration, for the many conscientious and courageous men who, actuated by a sense of duty for what they considered a point of conscience, abandoned the sweets of home, independence, and long-cherished associations.

76. This question of the party in whom the appointment of the clergy should be vested, is one of general importance, and has distracted many ages; and though it appeared first in Scotland in these times, which is pre-eminently a religious nation, yet it is of general interest, and will come in time to shake other countries besides the land of the mountain and the flood. Leaving it to theologians to determine whether the Divine grace is most likely to follow the "apostolic succession" in which some of the Episcopalians believe, or the popular election for which the Presbyterians contend, it is the duty of the temporal historian to apply himself to the practical and momentous question, In what way are good and faithful pastors for the people most likely to be secured? And the same principle will probably be found to apply here which regulates mere worldly appointments. No lasting security is to be found for a proper selection but in *singleness of patronage, coupled with reality of responsibility for its exercise*. There is no doubt that there was great truth in what the zealous Presbyterians alleged, that patronage in Scotland had run very much into a mode of providing sinecure retreats for decayed tutors in families, whose abilities, never very considerable, had been entirely worn out in teaching idle boys the rudiments of the dead languages. On the other hand, although, in the first fervour of innovation, much talent, especially of an oratorical kind, has been imported

into the Free Kirk, yet the continuance of such disinterested feelings is not to be permanently relied on, and little security is to be found for right appointments in the majority of a promiscuous multitude of five or six hundred persons, in whom numbers have destroyed the sense of responsibility without conferring the power of discrimination. Many improper appointments may be laid to the door of the Cabinet, when no one often knows by whom appointments are really made; but such complaints are seldom heard in regard to the filling up of judicial offices, which is known to be done by the Lord Chancellor, under the vigilant surveillance of the Bar. Perhaps

when the first heats consequent on the Disruption have passed away with the generation in which they arose, it will be found that the present system in the Established Church of Scotland, by which a list of five or six persons is presented by the patron to the congregation, and they make choice of the one whom they prefer, and which permits objections to be made, on cause shown, in the church courts, is the one which presents the fairest chance of lasting success in a matter in which a choice of difficulties is to be expected, and provision is to be made rather against the ultimate inroads of selfishness than for the present admission of zeal.

CHAPTER XLIV.

ENGLAND AND CANADA, FROM THE SUPPRESSION OF THE CHARTIST INSURRECTION TO THE MINISTERIAL CRISIS IN MAY 1839.

1. WHEN so many causes, some deeply affecting material interests, others keenly arousing political or religious fervour, were agitating the mother country, it was not to be expected that the colonies could escape convulsion. Least of all was this to be looked for in Canada, the lower province of which, nearly equally divided between persons professing the Romish and Protestant faith, presented a fair field for O'Connell's intrigues; while the upper, exposed to the constant influx of several thousand discontented emigrants from Ireland, afforded a growing nucleus of Radicalism utterly at variance with the general and devoted loyalty of its inhabitants. The progress of the dissensions has already been detailed, which for several years had divided the House of Representatives and the executive, the decision of which had been postponed, not effected, by successive governor-generals. But at length matters came to

a crisis, and appeal was made by both sides to the sword. The Canadian revolutionists contended that the Legislative Council or Upper House, which had hitherto, according to the analogy of the British constitution, been appointed by the Crown, should be elected by the people; and that the executive should be rendered accountable to the House of Representatives. The first demand was naturally suggested by the analogy of America, where the Senate is so elected, though by a double election; the latter was strictly in accordance with the British constitution. The demand, however, was made in such menacing terms, and it had been preceded by so long a course of passive resistance, in the form of withholding the supplies in the province, that it was resisted by Government, and negatived by the House of Commons, after a long debate, by a majority of 269 to 46. "Look," said Sir Robert Peel, who supported the Government

on this occasion, "at the position of Lower Canada, commanding the entrance of the mouth of the St Lawrence, and then ask if a population of half a million had a right to insist upon a measure which, in the heart of the British colonies in North America, would establish a French republic."

2. The difference between the temper of the people in Lower and Upper Canada at once appeared upon the receipt of this intelligence. The *habitants* of the lower province were instantly in a ferment, and the leading demagogues made a skilful use of the agitation to fan the flame into a conflagration. Confidently relying on Mr O'Connell and the Irish Catholic members, who composed the chief part of the majority which retained Ministers in power, to avert any extreme measures, they vigorously proceeded to stimulate instant insurrection. Armed men assembled in great numbers to listen to the most violent and seditious harangues, in which the tyranny of the British Parliament was vehemently denounced, and the example of the United States of America held up, amidst loud cheers, as an example to be imitated on a crisis similar to that which had now occurred. Government did not venture to prosecute the leaders of the movement; they were well aware, in the temper of the province, they would immediately be acquitted. A great meeting was held at St Charles, in the county of Richelieu, where a column was erected surmounted by a Cap of Liberty, at the foot of which PAPINEAU, the leader of the movement, was presented with a patriotic address by his admiring countrymen, who, marching in regular bands to the foot of the column, placed their hands on it, and solemnly devoted themselves to the service of their country. This imposing ceremony was followed by processions of the "Sons of Liberty" through the streets of Montreal, met by others styled the "Loyalists," which led to serious encounters, in which the former were generally worsted. On the other hand, so different was the temper of the upper province, that its governor, Sir Francis

Head, having dissolved its Assembly in the close of 1836, the new house returned was decidedly in favour of Government by a majority of 40 to 20. Instead of joining their brethren in Lower Canada in the chase of visionary improvements in the contest for organic changes, they set themselves to work, like real men of business, to remedy experienced evils, and voted the large sum of £500,000 for the formation of roads and bridges, which, by opening up its immense resources, laid the foundation of the subsequent unexampled progress of that portion of the British dominions.

3. Deprived in this manner of the prospect of support from the majority, at least, in the upper province, it is probable that Papineau and the revolutionists of the lower would have hesitated in coming to an actual appeal to arms, were it not that an accidental circumstance, arising from a foreign cause, introduced a division and discontent into the upper province, which encouraged them to proceed with their insurrectionary measures. This was the crusade against the banks in the United States, already explained, brought to a crisis by General Jackson's desperate attempt to destroy paper credit in the spring of 1837. The effects of that course of measures, so ruinous both to the United States and Great Britain, were felt with equal or even greater severity in the British provinces of North America. The general suspension of cash payments in New York, Philadelphia, and the principal commercial States of the Union, rendered a similar measure indispensable on the Canadian side of the frontier; for else the whole cash in the banks of both provinces would have been instantly drawn out to meet the necessities of the United States banks, themselves on the verge of insolvency from General Jackson's desperate measures. So universally was this felt to be the case, and so generally was it understood that the difficulties of the Canadian banks were owing to no faults or instability of their own, but to the pressure arising from foreign legislation, that the suspension

of cash payments (May 22, 1837) announced by the Quebec and some other banks met with general approbation and support. In vain the Governor, acting upon the maxims of the Home Government, adjured the banks in the most solemn terms to abide by their engagements, and not to suspend cash payments as long as they had a dollar in their coffers; the necessity of the case, and the clear appreciation of the *foreign nature* of the difficulty, overpowered every other consideration; and after a special session of parliament had been held in the upper province to consider the commercial difficulties which had occurred, a general suspension of cash payments took place. Like that in England in 1797 and 1848, this measure relieved the banks without injuring public credit; and when the foreign drain cash payments were resumed without any shock to the lasting stability of those valuable establishments. But in the mean time the derangement of commerce and abridging of private credit were extreme; and from the number of persons thus involved in difficulties, the revolutionary wedge was introduced into Upper Canada, though fortunately without being able to penetrate far.

4. In Lower Canada things bore a much more unpromising aspect, and the symptoms of an approaching convulsion soon became painfully apparent. The provincial parliament assembled on the 18th August; but no sooner were the resolutions of the House of Commons of March preceding communicated to them than they presented a long address, complaining bitterly of the tyrannical conduct of the Imperial Parliament, and announced their intention "of suspending their deliberations until the consummation of the reforms, and that of the Legislative Council above all, announced by and in the name of the imperial authorities." The Governor, Lord Gosford, described "the voluntary and continued abandonment of their functions by one branch of the legislature as a virtual annihilation of the constitution." The parliament was

of course prorogued, and both parties prepared to decide the question by force of arms. The military authorities did the utmost to render the small force at their disposal as efficient as possible. Two regiments were brought from Halifax, where, happily, disaffection was unknown, to Lower Canada; and a great meeting was held at Montreal of the Loyalists, when it was unanimously resolved to raise several regiments of volunteers to support the Government, which were immediately filled up with bold and resolute men, whose gallant bearing might well have made the insurgents hesitate before they hazarded all on an appeal to arms. At the same time, Sir Francis Head, in the upper province, felt so confident in the loyalty and steadiness of the inhabitants, that he not only sent all the regular forces out of the province into Lower Canada, but declined the offer of two regiments of militia, and one of volunteers, who offered to do garrison duty in the absence of the Queen's troops.

5. Government in the lower province, though perfectly aware that an insurrection was approaching, for long delayed taking any decided step to arrest it, from a desire, natural and generally laudable, to put their opponents in the wrong, by letting them take the lead in the adoption of warlike measures. At length, as it was ascertained that Papineau and his confederates had taken up their quarters to the south of the St Lawrence, in the villages of St Denis and St Charles, on the right bank of the river Richelieu, and that armed forces were there assembled, it was resolved to arrest them; and warrants to that effect were put into the hands of the civil officers, who were supported by military force. Colonel Gore, with five companies of regulars, a few mounted police, and a six-pounder, moved up the Richelieu river, on the night of the 22d November, from Sorel on St Denis, from which it was sixteen miles distant. After a fatiguing night's march of twelve hours over roads rendered almost impassable by heavy rains, they arrived at daylight at the village, which they found strongly

barricaded, and its entrance defended by 1500 men posted in stone houses, from which a severe and well-directed fire was opened on the troops who advanced to the assault. The resistance was so determined, and the superiority of the insurgents so great, that after having exhausted all their ammunition in an ineffectual fire, the military were obliged to return, with the loss of six killed and ten wounded. To add to the mortification of the soldiers, the badness of the roads rendered it necessary to abandon the field-piece during the retreat; and Lieutenant Weir, who had fallen wounded into the hands of the insurgents, was barbarously murdered by them in cold blood.

6. On the same night on which this ill-starred expedition took place against St Denis, Colonel Wetherell, with five companies of infantry, a party of mounted police, and two guns, moved from Chambly, down the Richelieu river, upon St Charles. More fortunate than his gallant brother officer, Colonel Wetherell met with decisive success. He did not reach St Charles, a distance of seventeen miles, owing to the badness of the roads and the destruction of the bridges, till noon on the 25th; but when he arrived there the works were stormed in the most gallant style, in despite of an obstinate resistance from the insurgents. The village, with the exception of one house, became a prey to the flames: the victors lost only three killed and eighteen wounded. Hearing of this success, the rebels precipitately abandoned their position at St Denis, which Colonel Gore entered without opposition on the 4th December. This success was followed by the complete dispersion of the armed bands on the banks both of the Richelieu and the Yamaska, and the flight of their leaders into the United States. One of these, named Brown, made his escape early, and lost the confidence of his followers by his pusillanimous conduct; another, Wolfred Nelson, a brave man, was captured by a party of volunteers before he got over the border.

7. These successes enabled Sir John Colborne, the commander-in-chief, a veteran of Waterloo fame, to direct his

chief disposable force from the south to the north of the St Lawrence, into the country of the Two Mountains, where the strength of the insurgents lay, and where it was known they were strongly intrenched. His force, including several companies of gallant volunteers, amounted to 1300 men. The first point which presented itself for attack was the village of St Eustache on the left bank of the Ottawa, which was strongly occupied by the insurgents. Alarmed by the approach of forces so considerable, a large part of them, including their commander, Girod, took to flight before the assault commenced. Four hundred, however, under Dr Chenier, threw themselves into a church and some adjoining buildings, where they made a most resolute stand. After a severe fire of two hours' duration, their barricades were beat down by the British artillery, the church was set on fire, the houses wrapt in flames, and their brave defenders driven out at the point of the bayonet. A hundred of the insurgents, including Chenier, were killed, and a hundred and twenty made prisoners. Girod, having been taken prisoner in the course of his flight, shot himself. On the following day Colborne advanced on St Benoit, where the chief body of the insurgents was understood to be posted; but on entering it, the town was found to be deserted except by two hundred rebels, who laid down their arms, and were dismissed to their homes. Unfortunately, such was the state of exasperation of the Loyalists in the British army at the state of proscription in which they had been long kept by their enemies, that they set fire to the village, which was in great part consumed before the flames could be extinguished by the soldiers of the Royals, 32d, and 83d, who had been engaged in this brilliant affair.

8. "Thus," said Lord Gosford, with justifiable pride, in his despatches, "have the measures adopted for putting down this reckless revolt been crowned with success. Wherever an armed body has shown itself, it has been completely dispersed; the principal leaders and instigators have been

killed, taken, or forced into exile; there is no longer a head, or concert, or organisation among the deluded and betrayed *habitans*; all the newspaper organs of revolution in the province, the *Vindicie*, *Minerve*, and *Liberal*, are no longer in existence, having ceased to appear in the commencement of the trouble; and in the short space of a month, a rebellion which at first wore so threatening an aspect, has, with much less loss of life than could have been expected, been effectually put down." It was not at first known what had become of Papineau, the leader of the insurrection, but it was ere long ascertained that he had reached New York in safety, having made his escape in the very commencement of the conflict. His conduct in heading it was the more inexcusable that he was well aware of the advantages which had accrued to Canada from the English connection, and had himself expressed them in the most emphatic terms.* It would be unaccountable, did we not recollect that he was a Catholic who at that time was directing the Romish movement in Ireland, and that it was by the aid of the Romish members in the House that the feeble and tottering Administration was retained in power.

9. While these important events were occurring in Lower Canada, the upper province was also, though in a much lesser degree, the theatre of convulsion; and the confidence of Sir Francis Head in the loyalty of the inhabitants was put to the severest test. Although the vast majority of that province were firm in their attachment to Great Britain, and devoted in their loyalty to their sovereign, yet there were some malcontents, chiefly Irish, who, if unresisted, were in a situation,

* "Compare," says Papineau, "our present happy situation with that of our fathers. From the day on which the British dominion supervened, the reign of law succeeded to that of violence. From that day the treasures, the navy, and the army of Great Britain are mustered to afford us an invincible protection; from that day the better part of her laws became ours, while our religion, property, and the laws by which they are governed, remain unaltered."—PAPINEAU on the English Government, 1820; *Ann. Reg.* 1838, p. 49.

for a time at least, to do very considerable mischief. It has been already mentioned that Sir Francis had sent all the regular troops out of the province, and even declined the aid of some battalions of volunteers, who tendered their services to guard a dépôt of six thousand arms at Toronto, its capital city. The result soon proved that this conduct, though bold, and in one view wise, was foolhardy.* No sooner was the intelligence of the rising in the lower province received in Toronto, than a proclamation appeared, headed, "Provincial Convention," and signed by "W. L. Mackenzie," the editor of a Radical newspaper, summoning the Convention to meet there on the 21st December. This was soon followed by a proclamation, calling on the people at once to take up arms, and expel their tyrants.† Armed meetings were at the same time held in different parts of the province, in which the most violent and treasonable language was used; but still the Governor, relying on the loyalty of the people, and thinking that the danger should be met by moral, not physical strength, took no visible steps to avert it. At length, on the night of the 4th December,

* "Considering the invasion with which we are still threatened, I conceived it to be absolutely my duty, by any means in my power, to lay before the American people the incontrovertible fact, that by the removal of her Majesty's troops, as also by the surrender of six thousand stand of arms to the civil authorities, the people of Upper Canada had virtually been granted an opportunity of revolting, and consequently, that as the British constitution had been protected solely by 'the sovereign will of the people,' it became, even by the greatest of all republican maxims, the only law of the land."—SIR FRANCIS HEAD'S Explanatory Memorandum to Lord GLENELG; *Parl. Paper*, 21st May 1838.

† "Canadians! do you love freedom—do you wish for perpetual peace, and a government founded upon the eternal heaven-born principle of the Lord Jesus Christ? Then buckle on your armour, and put down the villains who oppress and enslave our country, in the name of that God who goes forth with the arms of His people, and whose Bible shows that it is with the same human means whereby you put to death thieves and murderers, that you must put down, in the strength of the Almighty, those governments which, like bad individuals, trample on the law, and destroy its usefulness.—W. L. MACKENZIE."—*Ann. Reg.* 1838, pp. 12, 13.

Mackenzie, at the head of five hundred rebels, advanced towards Toronto, and on the way murdered Colonel Moodie, a distinguished Loyalist, who was passing Montgomerie's Tavern, their headquarters, on horseback. "Blood," said Mackenzie, "has now been spilled; we are in for it, and have nothing left but to advance."

10. They advanced accordingly, and soon reached Toronto, where the Governor, according to his own admission, was "in bed and asleep." Roused by the intelligence of the rebels' approach, he hastily rose, and hurried to the town-hall, where the arms were deposited, to prepare for a sudden defence. The first man he met was the Lord Chief-Justice of the province, with a musket on his shoulder. He was soon followed by a crowd of brave men, half dressed, and many of them unarmed, who hurried on the first alarm to what they knew would be the point of attack. Sir Francis hastily disposed these gallant men at the windows of the town-hall and adjoining houses; and scarcely had he done so, when the rebel column, headed by Mackenzie, approached. Seeing the windows occupied, however, by armed men, and being ignorant of their strength, the insurgents halted, and did not venture on an immediate attack. This hesitation, as is usually the case in such instances, proved fatal to the insurrection. In the interval, despatches were sent to COLONEL ALLAN M'NAB (afterwards Sir Allan M'Nab, Bart.), who commanded the militia, to claim their support, and that intrepid man and his faithful followers made their appearance at daybreak. Three hundred armed men were soon assembled, which increased in the course of the day to five hundred; and the "fiery cross" was despatched to all the parishes and townships, which soon roused the whole of the inhabitants to arms. Meanwhile Mackenzie and his followers committed every species of enormity; with his own hands he robbed the mail, and set fire to Dr Horne's house.

11. Finding that all attempts at an accommodation with the rebels were nugatory, as they demanded, as an in-

dispensable preliminary, that a convention should be assembled, Sir Francis proceeded to reduce them to submission by force of arms. On the 7th, Colonel M'Nab marched out of Toronto, and attacked them in their position at Montgomerie's Tavern, four miles off, whither they had retired, after the failure of their attempt to surprise the capital. The insurgents, being strongly posted in the tavern and adjacent buildings, and all armed with rifles, made a stout resistance; but the militia and volunteers, headed by M'Nab, pushed forward with a vigour worthy of veteran troops, carried all their defences, and drove them out at the point of the bayonet. A total rout ensued. Mackenzie, in the utmost agitation, ran off, and reached Buffalo in New York in disguise; while the flag of the rebels, bearing the words "Bidwell and the glorious minority, 1837 — a good beginning," fell into the hands of the victors. Their triumph was complete: the insurgents were all dispersed; a great number of prisoners were taken, who were immediately released, and dismissed to their homes; and but for the efforts of the American "sympathisers" to rekindle the flames of civil war, the upper province was entirely tranquillised. This great success was achieved by the Loyalists without the loss of a single man.

12. If the narrow escape which the Governor made from being surprised in the first outbreak of the insurrection showed a want of due precaution in the beginning, the conduct of the Canadians in the upper province proved that he had not miscalculated in reckoning upon their loyalty and patriotism. No sooner was intelligence received, which it was with extraordinary rapidity, of Mackenzie's attack upon Toronto, than the militia everywhere flew to arms, and, setting out in the snow in the depth of a Canadian winter, marched with alacrity to the defence of the capital. From Niagara, Gore, Lake Simcoe, and many other places, brave men, armed and unarmed, rushed forward unsolicited to the theatre of conflict. The Scotch Highlanders from Glengarry evinced a spirit

worthy of their descent ; they mustered at once nine hundred strong when the news arrived, and had marched one hundred miles through the snow, every man carrying his arms and provisions, before they were stopped by advices of the suppression of the insurrection. The whole upper province was in motion and in arms. The excitement was universal and indescribable. So great was the concourse of armed men who hastened to the support of the Government, that within three days ten thousand were assembled at Toronto and its vicinity, and Sir Francis was enabled to issue an order the day after Mackenzie's defeat, announcing that there was no further occasion for the resort of the militia to Toronto, and directing that of Bathurst, Johnston, Ottawa, and the eastern districts, to the lower province. From this outburst of patriotic feeling, it is evident that, even if the rebels had succeeded in surprising and capturing the Governor and taking the arms, they would have been in the end defeated by the loyalty and public spirit of the province.

13. The insurrection was now effectually suppressed, so far as it depended on its own resources. But it had extensive ramifications on the other side of the frontier ; and the American "sympathisers," as they were called, mustered in great strength along the Niagara river. Handbills and proclamations were openly placarded in Buffalo, and all the towns of the United States adjoining Canada, in the name of the "Provisional Government," in which 100 dollars in silver and 300 acres of the finest land in Canada were offered to every one who might join the patriot forces ; and it was stated that there would speedily be "10,000,000 acres of land fertile and fair at the disposal of the patriots, with the other vast resources of a country more extensive and rich in natural treasures than the United Kingdom or old France." The headquarters of these pirates were an island named Navy Island, in the Niagara river, about two miles above the Falls, and within the British territory. Of this island a body of 1500 Americans took posses-

sion on the 13th December, and they made it their chief depôt of arms and provisions, and planted a gun on it, which began to cannonade the populous village of Chippewa on the British side, about 600 yards distant. They drew their chief supplies from the American shore by means of a small steamer called the *Caroline*, which plied between the island and opposite bank, and enabled the troops assembled there to maintain their ground in the advanced position within the British territory which they had gained. Among other military stores, she had brought them the piece of artillery, which was employed in cannonading Chippewa.

14. Having ascertained these facts, Colonel M'Nab resolved to destroy the piratical vessel engaged in this clandestine warfare. On the 28th December, a party of militia was despatched from the British side to seize her. They found the vessel moored opposite the landing-place of Fort Schlosser on the American side, and strongly guarded by bodies of armed men both on board and on shore. Lieut. Drew led the boarding party, which, after a short but desperate conflict, carried the vessel, which was immediately set on fire after the prisoners had been taken out, and suffered to drift down the rapids to the Falls. It was swept down accordingly, and, still in flames, was precipitated over the terrific edge into the boiling caldron beneath, where it was immediately dashed to pieces.

15. This bold act, which reflected equal honour on the judgment and courage of Colonel M'Nab, was decisive of the present fate of the British North American provinces. Though perfectly warranted by the law of nations, seeing the *Caroline* had been engaged in piratical warfare against Great Britain, it made a very great impression in the United States, and immediately became the subject of the most unbounded declamation and exaggeration. It was said that an unprovoked attack had been made on an unarmed vessel in a state of profound peace, and a helpless crowd of women and children precipitated in

flames over the cataract of Niagara, in the dead of night, by an armed British force. Immense was the sensation which this announcement produced, which was increased by a picture of the burning vessel going over the Falls, which was circulated from one end of the Union to the other, and thrilled every heart with horror. By degrees, however, the real state of the case made its way through the clouds of falsehood with which it had been environed; and the truth became manifest that the *Caroline* was attacked because she was a pirate employed in peace in prosecuting private warfare, and only sent over the Falls after all the crew had been taken out. Seeing the British authorities thus determined, the President of the United States issued a proclamation, admitting the piratical warfare of the sympathisers in Navy Island, and forbidding its continuance;* and the American

* "Whereas, information having been received of a dangerous excitement on the northern frontier of the United States, in consequence of the civil war begun in Canada, and instructions having been given to the officers on that frontier, and application having been made to the Government of the adjoining States to prevent any unlawful interference of our citizens in the contest unfortunately commenced in the British provinces, additional information has just been received that, notwithstanding the proclamation of the governors of the States of New York and Vermont, exhorting their citizens to refrain from any unlawful acts within the territory of the United States, and notwithstanding the presence of the civil officers of the United States, who by my directions have visited the scene of commotion with a view of impressing the citizens with a proper sense of their duty, the excitement, instead of being appeased, is every day increasing in degree; that arms and ammunition, and other supplies, have been obtained by the insurgents in the United States; that a military force, consisting, in part at least, of citizens of the United States, had been actually congregated at Navy Island, and were still in arms under a citizen of the United States, and that they were constantly receiving accessions and aid.—I, Martin Van Buren, President of the United States, do hereby warn all such persons as shall compromise the neutrality of this Government by interfering in an unlawful manner with the affairs of the neighbouring British provinces, that they will render themselves liable to arrest and punishment under the laws of the United States.—M. VAN BUREN. January 5, 1838."—*Ann. Reg.* 1838, p. 318 (Public Documents).

armed force in Navy Island, thus denounced by their own Government, and learning they were about to be attacked by a body of British militia, evacuated it on the 14th of January 1838.

10. In this proclamation the President of the United States admitted, what was notoriously the fact, that the insurgents had obtained arms, ammunition, and other supplies within the territory of the United States. He might have added, what was not less the fact, that they were taken from the arsenals of the United States in presence of its civil officers, who were either unable or unwilling to prevent this covert and illegal warfare from going on. The governors of the frontier provinces issued proclamations against any interference, but did nothing *till the expedition had failed*. Then, and not till then, Van Renselaer, who commanded the sympathisers, was held to bail, and the arms, guns, and ammunition which had been taken from the public arsenals were replaced in them. Upon this the pirates changed the scene of their operations. They collected in force at Detroit in Michigan, making demonstrations against the western end of Lake Eric, while others menaced Kingston at the north-eastern end of Lake Ontario. Both parties, however, retired upon the approach of bodies of British militia despatched to meet them. A more serious conflict soon after ensued with a body of Americans, who, after collecting at Sandusky Bay in the State of Ohio, took possession of Point Pelée Island in Lake Erie, within the British territory. The troops and artillery despatched to dislodge them, under General Maitland, marched from the mainland twenty miles over the ice, and took up such a position as obliged the Americans to fight. A severe conflict ensued, in which the invaders were utterly routed, not, however, without some loss on the part of the British, who had two killed and thirty wounded. This checked the incursions of the sympathisers, who did not again disturb the frontier till the

insurrection a second time broke out in the following winter.

17. Immense was the sensation which the intelligence of the outbreak in Canada produced in Great Britain. In the first moments of alarm all the disposable forces which could be collected, including a regiment of the Foot Guards, were sent out; and on this occasion the example was first afforded of a ship of the line carrying a battalion of armed men, eight hundred strong, across the Atlantic. Parliament took the state of the colony into consideration on the 16th January, when Ministers introduced their remedial measures, which consisted in a suspension of the constitution of the colony, and the appointment of Lord Durham as Governor, with very ample powers for its future government and remodelling. Lord Gosford had resigned, and come home immediately after the rebellion was suppressed, leaving the interim direction of the province in the hands of the commander-in-chief, Sir John Colborne, to whom in such critical circumstances it seemed proper to intrust it. Sir Francis Head also, having differed with Government on some points of domestic policy, resigned his situation as governor of the upper province, and was succeeded by Sir George Arthur. Very animated debates on the subject took place in both Houses of Parliament, in the course of which the Duke of Wellington made use of the celebrated expression "that a great nation cannot make a little war," and severely condemned Ministers for not having had a large military force in Canada when the rebellion, so long anticipated, broke out. Lord Durham declared that he accepted the onerous charge "with inexpressible reluctance," and that he felt "he could accomplish it only by the cordial and energetic support of his noble friends, the members of Her Majesty's Cabinet, by the co-operation of the Imperial Parliament, and the generous forbearance of the noble lords opposite, to whom he had been always politically opposed."

18. The session of the legislature in

Upper Canada was prorogued on the 6th March; but before it separated, a very able report was presented by the committee of the Assembly to the Governor, highly important, as indicating the wants of the sound and loyal portion of the population. This report recommended that all the British provinces in North America should be incorporated in a legislative union, "which would put them on a level with the most powerful nations," but that the local concerns should still be left as heretofore to the provincial parliaments; that the Queen should incorporate in her royal title the distinct claim of sovereignty over this portion of her dominions, and that their governor should be a nobleman of high rank, and bear the title of Viceroy; that Montreal should be incorporated with the upper province, as the present division left them without an independent outlet to the ocean; that representatives from the colonies of North America should have seats in the *British House of Commons*, in the proportion of two for each of the two Canadas, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick respectively, and one each from Newfoundland and Cape Breton—in all ten from the whole provinces of North America. The report concludes with a well-founded expression of satisfaction at the proof which recent events have afforded, how ardently the 600,000 inhabitants of Canada, of British origin, desire to continue subject to the British crown; and complains loudly of the "inefficiency imputed by a large class of the most intelligent of their fellow-subjects to the colonial department in England, owing to the frequent changes of the head of that department, and the incoherency of systems which such changes involve." English statesmen may well ponder over the contents of this temperate and able state-paper, every proposition of which subsequent events have proved to be well founded. Upon the adoption or rejection of these views, the retention of these magnificent colonies, as part of the dominions of Great Britain, is entirely dependent.

19. The Government measures in regard to Canada were carried in the House of Commons by a majority of 246, the numbers being 262 to 16, and in the House of Lords without a division; and Lord Durham proceeded on his arduous mission. The voyage was long and unpropitious, and he did not land at Quebec till 29th May. He found difficulties of the most appalling kind awaiting him. No less than 161 prisoners were in custody awaiting their trial, although 326 had been liberated without any farther proceedings. Of these, seventy-two were charged as being the principal promoters of the insurrection. It was universally known that no convictions could be obtained against any of these from juries in Lower Canada, as the majority were generally French; and even where this was not the case, the English law, which required *unanimity*, precluded the hope of justice being ever administered by them in political cases. Aware of this obstacle, Sir John Colborne had delayed the trial of all the prisoners till the new Lord High Commissioner's arrival. The difficulty would have been avoided had martial law been at once proclaimed when the rising began; but unfortunately this had not been done, from a desire to avoid proceeding to extreme measures; and the consequence was, that they could not now be tried except by the ordinary tribunals, without incurring the just reproach of accusing them under an *ex post facto* law. Such was the first difficulty which presented itself to Lord Durham on his arrival; a phalanx of prisoners awaiting their trial, a political necessity of bringing them to justice, and an absolute impossibility of doing this, with any chance of success, by the only legal means which the constitution left at his disposal. And of the reality of this last danger ample proof was afforded in the sequel; for a Frenchman named Chartand having been murdered in cold blood by a party of the Canadian rebels, they were acquitted by the jury in the face of the clearest evidence, and of a

decided charge for conviction by the chief justice who presided at the trial. The acquitted murderers and perjured jury were immediately fettered throughout Lower Canada as the purest and most exalted patriots. With truth did Lord Durham say, in his despatch on the subject to Lord Glenelg, the Colonial Secretary, "In the present state of the province, trial by jury exists only to defeat the ends of justice, and provoke the righteous scorn and indignation of the community."

20. In this distressing dilemma, one of three courses alone presented itself to the consideration of Lord Durham. The first was to go on with the treason trials in the ordinary way, with the *certainty* of the prisoners being all acquitted, and immediately paraded as flaming patriots through the province. The second was to try them under an *ex post facto* law, either before courts-martial, or a tribunal specially constituted without a jury, subject to all the animadversions which such a course of proceeding would justly excite. The third was to pack the juries by whom they were to be tried, and fill them only with British subjects; a course which would indeed secure their conviction, but would be open to the gravest reproaches, as a scandalous perversion of legal forms. It was a course, however, which might easily have been adopted, as the powers vested in the sheriffs by whom the juries were summoned were so extensive and ill-defined that scarcely any check existed on their malversations; and it was the one which the prisoners most dreaded, from a very natural apprehension that Government would seek to counteract the undue partiality of juries on the one side, by a similar stretch of partiality on the other. The feelings of justice in the mind of the Lord High Commissioner, however, revolted against such a perversion of the forms of justice, though it was pressed upon him as the only practicable course by several of his leading counsellors; and he preferred acceding to a petition presented to him by the leading political prisoners on 25th

June, in which they offered, in order to avoid a trial, and in order to give, as far as in their power, tranquillity to the country, to place themselves at his lordship's discretion. In pursuance of this petition, an ordinance appeared on 28th June, the anniversary of the Queen's coronation, which declared that Wolfred Nelson, and seven other persons therein named, had acknowledged their participation in high treason, and had submitted themselves to her Majesty's pleasure; that Papineau, with fifteen others, had absconded; and enacted that it should be lawful for her Majesty to transport Nelson and his seven associates to Bermuda during pleasure, there to be subjected to such restraints as should be deemed fit; and that if any persons of the above classes should be found at large without permission, they should suffer death as traitors. Two other classes, implicated in the murder of Lieutenant Weir and Joseph Chartland, were excepted from the general amnesty which, with the exceptions above-mentioned, was proclaimed to all persons engaged in the late disturbances. The Gazette which contained this notification announced that the Governor and special council were actively engaged in the preparation of ordinances relative to jury trial, bankrupt law, municipal institutions, general education, registry offices, and an equitable commutation of feudal services.

21. Excellent as this ordinance was in most respects, there was one particular in which, in point of form, it was unfortunately open to exception. It is a general principle of law, that the jurisdiction of any judge or public officer does not extend beyond the territory over which he presides, and that any sentence he may pronounce can only be carried into execution within that territory. For this reason, when the sentence of transportation in lieu of death or corporal pains was introduced into Great Britain, a special statute was passed in the reign of Queen Anne, authorising judges to pronounce such sentence, leaving it to the executive to carry it into execu-

tion, by ordering the removal of the convict beyond seas. No such statute had been passed in regard to the Canadas, and therefore the power of its judges and governors ceased when the limits of their jurisdiction were passed. When Lord Durham, therefore, pronounced sentence of banishment to the *Bermudas*, and detention therein at the Queen's pleasure, he obviously, in strict legal form, exceeded his powers. What he should have done, was to have sentenced them to imprisonment in *Canada*, till the Queen's pleasure in regard to their ultimate destination and disposal was taken, or simply banished them from Canada, which was, in the strictest sense, within his powers. But the error was one of form only, and was not only trivial, but it had proceeded from the very best motives. It spared the lives of the criminals, which had been justly forfeited to the offended laws of their country, removed them from the theatre of their machinations and their danger, and avoided the scandal, otherwise unavoidable, of either convicting the prisoners by means of a packed jury, or converting them into triumphant martyrs by the verdict of a perjured one. Nothing was easier than for the Government at home to have supplied what was wanting in legal form. All that was required was to have passed an Act, which could have been done in three days, confirming the ordinance as a measure of state necessity, and authorising the detention of the criminals in Bermuda or elsewhere, or commuting their sentences into simple banishment from the whole British provinces of North America. The reasons for sustaining the ordinances were explained by Lord Durham, in a despatch to Lord Glenelg on the subject, in the clearest terms, and they are so convincing as must ever command the assent of every unprejudiced mind.*

* "These measures have met with the entire approbation of Sir John Colborne and the heads of what is called the British party; they declared they did not require any sanguinary punishment, but they desired security for the future, and the certainty that the returning tranquillity of the province should not be arrested by the machinations of these

22. The technical difficulty regarding the detention of the prisoners beyond the limits of Canada, does not seem to have occurred either to Lord Durham or any of his councillors, none of whom were lawyers, and with whom the desire to get quit of the prisoners was very naturally paramount to every other consideration. But though this was a most pressing object with those who were sending the prisoners away, it was not equally urgent with those who were to receive them; and accordingly, Sir Stephen Chapman, the Governor of Bermuda, felt not a little embarrassed as to the course which he should pursue when these unwelcome strangers arrived there, which they did in the middle of July. After consultation with the law-officers of the Crown in that island, it was determined that there was no legal ground on which they could be kept in detention; and to solve the difficulty, they were merely put on their parole not to leave the island. At the same time, urgent despatches were sent off to the Government at home, requesting instructions how to act in the embarrassing circumstances which had arisen.

23. Unfortunately, the nobleman at the head of the colonial department of Great Britain at this time was by no means equal to the crisis which had arisen. Lord Glenelg, formerly Mr Charles Grant, was a man of talents

ringleaders of the rebellion, either here or in the United States. This I have effected for them to their contentment. I did not think it right to transport these persons to a convict colony, for two reasons: first, because it was affixing a character of moral infamy on their acts which public opinion would not sanction; and, secondly, because I hold it would be impolitic to force on the colony itself persons who would be looked upon in the light of political martyrs, and thus acquire, perhaps, a degree of influence, which might be applied to evil uses in a community composed of such dangerous elements. On consultation, therefore, with Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Paget, I determined on sending them to Bermuda, where they would be placed under strict surveillance. There is, however, little fear of their attempting to escape, as such an act would close at once, and for ever, the door against their re-entering their native country."—LORD DURHAM to LORD GLENELG, 29th June 1838; *Parl. Papers*.

and amiable character, but he was destitute of all the great and commanding qualities of a statesman. Born of a family of sincere but perhaps ultra-religious convictions, he saw everything, if the expression may be used, through a conscientious medium. He made no allowance for the difference of men from race, circumstances, or political institutions, but applied the same undeviating rule of right and wrong to the half-civilised backwoodsman or the savage Caffre, which he would have done to the sturdy Presbyterian or the zealous Episcopalian. This principle is right in the main, for morality, individual or political, is of universal obligation; but it requires in practice to be largely modified in its application to different places, and some of the greatest calamities recorded in history have arisen from its unbending enforcement. A melancholy example of this will occur in the sequel, in the case of the Caffre war.

24. In addition to the peril arising to Lord Durham and the Canadas from the rigid and over-strict principles of the Colonial Minister, there was an additional danger of the most formidable kind, owing to the state of parties at the time when intelligence of the insurrection arrived in Great Britain. The Government, which, since its reconstruction under Lord Melbourne, had never been sure of a majority in the House of Peers, had only one of twenty or thirty, almost entirely composed of Irish Catholics, in the Commons. In these circumstances, it was perilous in the extreme to take a decided line in regard to an insurrection which excited the sympathy of the Romish party so strongly as that of the French *habitans* of Lower Canada had done. The Tories, exasperated by the loss of office, and the retention of it by their opponents when they could only command so small a majority, eagerly laid hold of any slip in administration to drive Ministers into a minority, and compel them to resign. Lord Brougham, who had never forgiven his former colleagues the reconstruction of the Cabinet, on Sir R.

Peel's resignation, without his forming part of it, signalled himself by the extreme bitterness with which he headed the onslaught. Lord Durham, in the hour of his need, was far from experiencing either "the cordial and sincere support of his noble friends in the Cabinet," or the "generous forbearance of the noble lords opposite," on which he had relied when he set out on his arduous mission. The result was, that, after protracted debates in both houses of Parliament, which occupied the whole of summer, and fill up nearly five hundred pages of the Parliamentary Debates, the ordinance was annulled by Act of Parliament, and a bill was passed declaring an indemnity to its authors for the consequence of their now declared illegal acts. The majority in the Commons on this subject was so large that the Opposition in that house did not venture on a division; in the Lords it was 54 to 36.

25. "I cannot but say," said Lord Melbourne, in communicating the resolution of Government to disavow the ordinance to the House of Peers, "that it is with the deepest alarm and regret that I have taken this course. Nor is it without very great apprehension of the consequence that I have come to this determination." The result soon proved that these anticipations were well founded, and that Government on this occasion had acted a timid and selfish, rather than a wise and magnanimous part. Lord Durham first received, *through American newspapers*, intelligence of the disavowal of the ordinance, and the proceedings of the House of Lords on the evenings of the 7th, 9th, and 10th of August, when the subject was finally discussed. Feeling that his weight and usefulness as Governor-general were at an end, by this decisive censure of his conduct in the most important particular, he immediately took the resolution to resign, which he communicated forthwith to the Cabinet, accompanied with a long explanatory memoir on his own conduct. His resignation was accepted, and Mr Poulett Thomson, afterwards Lord Syden-

ham, was appointed his successor. It is impossible to doubt that in doing so Lord Durham acted a dignified and appropriate part; but it is difficult to bestow a similar meed of praise on a proclamation which he published on the occasion, in which he openly announced to the Bermuda exiles, and other refugees, that as a general amnesty had been proclaimed by his authority under certain exceptions, and the exceptions had been disallowed by Government, there was no impediment to their immediate return to Canada, which accordingly took place. There could be no doubt that this view of the result of the timid policy of Government was well founded, though the policy of the ex-governor himself announcing it to his rebellious subjects was not equally apparent.*

26. But although Lord Durham retired from his command, he left his mantle to his successor. During the brief period—little exceeding four months—that he had held office, he had collected with extraordinary diligence and great ability a vast mass of valuable information regarding both the Canadas and the whole British provinces of North America, which was digested in a long report replete with the most important suggestions regarding those splendid portions of the British dominions. He ascribed the chief evils in Lower Canada to the animosity of the British and French races, which no period of existence under the same government had been able to extinguish. This animosity at that period was carried so far, that they not only had scarcely any social intercourse, but each race had its separate steamboats, banks, and hotels.

* "The proclamation contained an entire amnesty, qualified only by the exceptions specified in the ordinance. The ordinance has been disallowed, and the proclamation is confirmed. Her Majesty having been advised to refuse her assent to the exceptions, the amnesty exists without qualification. No impediment, therefore, exists to the return of the persons who have made the most distinct admission of guilt, or have been excluded by me from the province on account of the danger to which it would be exposed by their presence."—*Proclamation*, October 9, 1838; *Ann. Reg.* 1838, p. 322, note.

The English were ultra-English, the French ultra-French, and every question, whatever it arose from, ere long ran into one or other of these exclusive channels. The representative system, also, was little better than a solemn mockery, the representatives being shorn of all real authority except in local and comparatively immaterial concerns, and the forms of a responsible, being combined with the reality of an irresponsible, government. As a consequence of this want of effective popular control, government and its patronage and resources were (especially in the upper province) farmed out for the benefit of a certain number of families or ruling districts, and the great bulk of the community excluded from all participation in them. Great abuses also existed in the administration of justice; and beyond the walls of Quebec, all regular conduct either of the law or of public affairs was almost unknown. As a remedy for these evils, he suggested a great variety of changes, the principal of which was the union of the two provinces in one united Assembly, and a great extension of the power of the local legislature, so as to realise the favourite colonial wish of real responsible government.

27. Scarcely had Lord Durham quitted the capital of Canada, which he did on the 1st November, when the ruinous effect of the timid policy of the British Government in not supporting his ordinances became apparent. The Bermuda prisoners were all released, and instead of evincing either the smallest contrition for the treasons of which they had been guilty, or the least gratitude for the extraordinary lenity with which they had been treated, they set themselves at work immediately to organise a fresh insurrection. It had been originally intended that it should have broken out in Montreal; but numerous arrests which took place there on the very night of Lord Durham's departure, caused a different locality to be selected. On the 3d the explosion took place, and the *habitants* were once more in arms against the British Crown. The insurrection,

which broke out to the south of the St Lawrence, in the county of Beauharnois, began with an attack of four hundred men on the house of Mr Ellice, a great proprietor in Lower Canada, who was made prisoner, and carried off as a hostage. On the same day, a body of armed men secreted themselves in the neighbourhood of Caughnawaga, an Indian village, the inhabitants of which had recently been converted to Christianity. Information having been brought to the Indians, who were at church, they instantly raised the war-whoop, and falling on the rebels, who made scarce any resistance, took seventy prisoners, and dispersed the whole party.

28. Sir John Colborne, who on the departure of Lord Durham had resumed the interim command of the province, acted with the vigour and decision which in the outset of civil troubles is the general harbinger of success; and the military force at his disposal had been so considerably augmented, that he was enabled to carry on operations with the necessary means and promptitude. Having received intelligence that between the 3d and 6th November four thousand insurgents had assembled at Napierville in La Prairie, under the command of Robert Nelson, Dr Cote, and Gagnon, all three returned refugees, he directed Sir James Macdonnell and General Clitherow, with the Guards and a body of infantry, to move against them; but owing to the badness of the roads they did not arrive there before the 10th, when they found the whole body had dispersed. The leaders, before doing so, had issued a proclamation containing a declaration of independence, a republican form of government, the confiscation of the crown-lands and clergy reserves, the abolition of imprisonment for debt and of the feudal services, and the institution of a register for mortgages. The insurgents, during their stay at Napierville, being in close union with the American sympathisers, detached a force to open a communication with them in the neighbourhood of Odell, on the Richelieu. But this force on its march fell in with a body of 200

loyalist volunteers, by whom they were totally routed, with the loss of a field-piece and three hundred stand of arms. The same body of Loyalists, on the 9th, fell in with the main body of the insurgents, greatly superior in number, who were retreating from Napierville. They threw themselves into the church of Odell, and awaited the attack. The rebels were not long of commencing the assault, which they deemed sure of success; but such was the gallantry of the volunteers and the steadiness of their defence, that the assailants were repulsed with the loss of fifty killed and twice that number wounded. These successes so damped the spirits of the insurgents that the rebellion entirely ceased in Lower Canada, where it had been almost completely suppressed by the energy and spirit of the loyalist volunteers, with very little assistance from the regular troops. On the other hand, it deserves to be recorded to the credit of the insurgents, that although they were at first altogether twelve thousand strong, and had Mr Ellice and nearly a hundred Loyalists in their hands for several days, no deeds of cruelty were exercised towards them, and their captors even showed them the shortest way to rejoin their friends on the suppression of the insurrection.

29. The rebellion would never have extended on this occasion to Upper Canada had it not been for the efforts of the American sympathisers, who made the most vigorous exertions to instigate and support it in that quarter. On the evening of November 12, a body of five hundred Americans with several field-pieces crossed the St Lawrence at Prescott, and effected a landing on the British territory. They were there quickly attacked by three armed steamers, and a small body of regulars and militia under the command of Captain Landon, R.N., and Colonel Young. After a brief combat the invaders gave way, and retired to a stone building and windmill, from which they kept up so vigorous a fire, especially with their field-pieces, that the British, who had no artillery, were unable to dislodge them. They took positions, however, which prevented

their escape, while the war-steamers effectually cut off their communication with the American shore. Meanwhile despatches were sent off for succour, and ere long four companies of the 83d, with two guns and a howitzer, arrived under Colonel Dundas, which were soon followed by a company of the 93d Highlanders. The investment of the building and windmill was now made closer, and the artillery opened a fire at four hundred yards upon the massive walls of the latter. Before a practicable breach could be effected, however, the enemy evacuated the position, and were taken prisoners in endeavouring to effect their escape. The loss of the British in this warm affair was forty-five killed and wounded; but they took three guns from the enemy, besides sixteen wounded, and a hundred and fifty-nine prisoners were taken and sent off to Kingston, to be tried before courts-martial. Of these no less than a hundred and thirty-one were natives of the United States.

30. This rude repulse for some time checked the incursions of these lawless marauders; but the Americans were too much set upon Canadian insurrection and spoliation to abandon their designs without further efforts. On December 4, at daybreak, a fresh body of four hundred men landed at Sandwich, at the western extremity of Upper Canada, burned a steamboat, set fire to the barracks, in which two men perished, and inhumanly murdered Dr Hume, a military surgeon, who accidentally fell into their hands from mistaking them for a body of provincial militia. These atrocities so roused the indignation of the Canadians, that when the militia under Colonel Prince came up and attacked the invaders, twenty-six of their number were slain, and only twenty-five prisoners taken. The remainder fled, with scarcely any resistance, across the frontier, and this terminated the hostilities in Upper Canada.

31. But although the war in the field had terminated, that on the scaffold was to commence, and many brave men were to expiate by their lives the immense fault of the British Gov-

ernment in annulling the wise and humane ordinances of Lord Durham on occasion of the first insurrection. The number of prisoners taken and awaiting their trial in the prisons both of Montreal and Toronto was very great, and their disposal occasioned no small embarrassment to Government. No less than 753 were confined in the jail of the former of these places. Of these 164 were discharged at once; and of the whole remainder only twelve were brought to trial, all of French birth or extraction. Of these, two were acquitted by the court-martial before which they were arraigned, and the remainder were sentenced to death. Two only were executed, Cardinal and Duquette, the former a notary, the latter a tavern-keeper, who had been prominent instigators of the insurrection. The other convicts were sentenced to various periods of transportation or imprisonment. It must ever be considered as in the highest degree honourable to the British Government, that two formidable insurrections, in so important a part of its dominions, were suppressed with so small a sacrifice of life—a striking contrast to the streams of noble blood which a century before had streamed on the scaffold in Scotland on occasion of the Highland rebellion, and warranting the hope that in process of time this barbarous infliction, in political cases, will entirely disappear before the growing influence of humanity.

32. A more delicate and perilous task awaited the Government in the disposal of the American prisoners taken at Prescott, for there political and national passions of the most violent kind interfered on both sides. On the one hand, the Canadian Loyalists insisted that the renewal of the insurrection and the invasion had been entirely owing to the mistaken and ill-deserved lenity which had been shown to the insurgents on occasion of the first outbreak, and that there could be no security for the British provinces till the law was allowed to take its course against these repeated and incorrigible offenders. On the other hand, the excitement in the

United States on account of the Canadian sympathisers was so strong that there was the greatest danger that, if the punishment of death was inflicted on any considerable number of the invaders, it might become too strong for the Government, and precipitate the two countries into a ruinous war, despite the utmost efforts of the rulers on both sides to prevent it. In these difficult circumstances, the conduct of the executive on the British side was so firm as to command respect, and at the same so moderate as not to excite animosity. A court-martial assembled at Kingston on the 24th November, before which Von Schoultz, a Pole, the commander of the Prescott invasion, and three of his associates, Abbey, George, and Woodruff, were tried, condemned, and executed. They met their fate with unpretending fortitude, only complaining of the deception which had been practised upon them in regard to the nature of the enterprise on which they were to be engaged, and the amount of support they were likely to meet with. Their death was followed by that of five others, three of whom had been concerned in the piratical and barbarous inroad at Sandwich. This closed the melancholy list of capital convictions for these outrages, though a great number of others were sentenced to various penalties of lesser degree.* The Government of the United States interfered on humane grounds, but made no *casus belli* on account of these executions, though one of the sufferers was a colonel in their militia. On the contrary, they always

* PERSONS CONVICTED OF TREASON OR POLITICAL FELONY IN UPPER CANADA, FROM 1ST OCTOBER 1837 TO 1ST NOVEMBER 1838.

Pardoned on giving security,	140
Sentenced to confinement in penitentiary,	14
Sentenced to banishment,	18
Sentenced to transportation to Van Diemen's Land,	27
Escaped from Fort Henry,	12
Escaped from Cape Diamond,	1
Tried by court-martial,	1
Tried from Toronto hospital,	1
Sentenced to death,	1

—Ann. Reg. 1838, p. 336

held out to the British Cabinet that the piratical irruptions were done against their wishes and without their consent, and that, so far from favouring the views of the sympathisers, they considered the union of the Canadas to their States as likely to prove prejudicial to their best interests.

33. There is no reason to doubt that this statement on the part of the American Government was sincere; but it is not the less true that the system which it has often permitted its people to pursue, in this particular, is in the highest degree dangerous and unjust. It is no answer to the complaints of a neighbouring people that their territory has been invaded, their subjects slaughtered, and their towns burned, by the pirates of an adjoining state, to say that it was all done without the knowledge or consent of their Government, that their artillery has been violently taken out of their arsenals by armed mobs, and that the national forces were inadequate to prevent their pillage, and the misappropriation of their resources to foreign aggression. No government is entitled in this manner to abdicate its functions, and shelter itself under alleged neutrality, so far as itself is concerned, when it permits its subjects to engage, without efficient check, in piratical incursions against its neighbours, often of the most dangerous character. If it pleads in extenuation that it is too weak to prevent such outrages, it affixes the darkest stigma upon the character of institutions which fail in discharging the first duty of government, that of preventing private warfare. The English historian need not fear incurring the imputation of undue national prejudice in making these observations, for he must confess with a blush, that it was his own country which began this iniquitous system, and that the American sympathisers only applied to the British dominions that species of covert hostility which their Government had sanctioned in regard to the Spanish colonies of South America, and recently introduced, with such

ruinous consequences, into the European dominions of old Spain.

34. These decisive successes on the part of the British Government closed both the gulf of rebellion in the two Canadas, and the dangerous hostility on the American frontier. It was followed, however, by consequences the very reverse of what had been expected by both parties in that unhappy contest. The Loyalists anticipated the entire subjection of the colonies to British rule, now that their opponents had been so completely defeated. The *habitans* and their revolutionary leaders dreaded the establishment of a military government by the victors, which should abrogate their liberties, and extinguish both their nationality and peculiar laws. The result was entirely different from what either party had prognosticated. Lord Durham's report and recommendations were carried into full effect by his successors, though he himself fell a victim to the timidity of Government and the virulence of faction at home. In that valuable document he had signalled, as next to the division of races which embittered everything in Lower Canada, the existence in the upper province of a "family compact," which had caused all the patronage and benefits of Government to flow in a peculiar and restricted channel in the upper province. In his report he strongly urged the adoption of a more liberal and catholic policy, which should take away the latter ground of complaint, and the union of the two provinces in one legislature, which might ultimately remove the asperity of the former. Both suggestions were adopted and carried into effect by his successor, Lord Sydenham. After a considerable delay, but not longer than was required to mature the details of so great an innovation, the new constitution was proclaimed (Feb. 10, 1841) in Canada, a united legislature established, with a local government really, not merely in name, subjected to public control. The Legislative Council, or Upper Chamber, was to be appointed by the Crown. The House

of Assembly, or Lower Chamber, was to consist of 78 members; 39 from Upper, and an equal number from Lower Canada. The consequences of this change have been strange and unexpected, but on the whole eminently beneficial both to the colonies and the mother country.

35. The first effect was one which the Loyalists were far from expecting, and which gave them, it must be confessed, a most reasonable ground of complaint. When the representatives of the two provinces were united in one house, it was found, contrary to what had been generally anticipated, that the Liberals and French party had a majority in the Assembly. The consequence of course was, that the rule of the "family compact" in the upper province came to an end, and that the ministry were taken from the party which had the majority in the Legislature. Papineau and his fellow-conspirators became public functionaries. Though this was entirely in accordance with the principles of representative government, yet it excited at first the most violent heats and animosities in the British party. They complained that Papineau and the leaders of the insurrection had been elevated to power, and enjoyed all the sweets of government, while they, who had imperilled their lives and fortunes to maintain the British supremacy and connection, were excluded from all share in the administration of the country they had saved. There can be no question that there was both reason and justice in these complaints; and after the violent

collision which had taken place, and the glorious spirit they had evinced, they were peculiarly natural in Colonel M'Nab and the Conservative leaders. Nevertheless it does not appear that any other course could have been pursued by a government subject to the real control of a popular assembly; and if experience, the true test of wisdom in a course of government, is referred to, the result seems to establish in the most triumphant manner the prudence of the line which was adopted.

36. The rebellion, as might have been expected, threw a grievous damp for a season over the fortunes of Canada; the imports from England, and emigrants from that country, exhibited a striking falling-off in the years 1838 and 1839.* But from the time when the Government appeared to be firmly established, and the Legislature of the two provinces was united in one Assembly, with a ministry subject to effective public control, the Canadas took a start, not only beyond anything recorded in their history, but perhaps unexampled, in the absence of gold or silver mines, in the history of the world. During the ten years from 1841 to 1851, the free population of the United States increased 37 per cent, the slave 27 per cent; and this certainly was a sufficiently large growth for a country numbering, at the commencement of the period, nearly seventeen millions of inhabitants. But it was trifling in comparison of the increase of the two Canadas during the same years,† the population of which, chiefly in consequence of immigration

* Emigrants to Canada in 1836,	27,456	To the world.
" " 1837,	28,392	75,417
" " 1838,	3,452	72,024
		33,222

—*Parl. Papers*, 1836-7-8.

† Free population of the United States in 1840,	14,582,102
1850,	20,089,909
Increase, 37.77 per cent.	
Slave population of the United States in 1840,	2,487,358
" " 1850,	3,179,587
Increase, 27.91 per cent.	
Total population of Canada in 1841,	1,156,139
" " 1851,	1,842,265
Increase, 59.84 per cent.	
Population of Upper Canada in 1841,	465,357
" " 1851,	952,004
Increase, 104.55 per cent.	

—*Prospects of Canada*, 1854, pp. 66, 67.

from the British Islands, swelled no less than 59 per cent, while the increase of the upper province was 104 per cent. In 1834, the exports to Canada were £1,018,000, her imports, £1,063,000; while in 1854 her exports and imports, taken together, were £13,945,000, of which £4,622,000 was composed of imports from Great Britain. So rapid and sustained a growth, in so short a period, without gold discoveries, is perhaps unexampled in the history of the world.* Not less remarkable has been the increase in the agricultural produce of the province, which, in Upper Canada, has quadrupled in ten years preceding 1851, while its shipping has doubled during the

same period; and the consumption of British manufactures since 1852, when the gold discoveries came into play, is, on an average, £2, 6s. a-head for each inhabitant,† being more than double of what it is in the United States, where it is only £1, 2s. per head.‡

37. Many causes have doubtless contributed to produce this astonishing increase of material prosperity and inhabitants in Canada, during the period which has elapsed since the union of the provinces and the establishment of popular and responsible government in 1841; and it would be unreasonable to ascribe it entirely to any one of them. Among these, a prominent place must be assigned to the establishment of free

* "No nation or community, with the solitary exception of Victoria, can boast of such extensive progress as Canada; but there is this important difference in the two colonies, that the sudden rise of the Australian colony was almost solely attributable to the rush which was made for the recently discovered gold. In 1834, Canada imported goods to the amount of only £1,063,000, and exported in return produce and manufactures of her own soil to the amount of £1,018,000; but in 1854 the value of her exports and imports was not less than £13,945,000. If we analyse these figures, it will be found that the mother country supplied Canada with her manufactures to the amount of £4,622,000; the United States sent her £2,945,000; foreign countries, £268,507; and the adjoining British North American colonies, £159,000. Every person in Canada consumed on an average the produce of foreign countries to the amount of £3, 14s. 10d., while in the adjoining States the average consumption reached only £2, 7s. per head. The nature of the Canadian trade with foreign countries may be judged of by the following facts: The produce of the forests of the colony—the vast timber trade—which was exported, was of the value of £2,355,000; of vegetable food, principally corn and flour, £1,995,099; animal produce, £342,631; fish, £85,000; manufactures, £35,106; various agricultural products, £26,618; ships, £520,187. The total exports, if divided among the population, would give an average of £2, 15s. to each individual, or 8s. more than is the case in the United States. The entire value of the British exports of the United States was £23,461,000, or about £1 per head of the population; while the consumption of British goods by the Canadians was at the rate of £2, 6s. 7d. per head."—*Canadian News*, Aug. 24, 1856.

The progress of this astonishing trade has been as follows during the last seven years:—

Years.	Imports.	Exports.	Revenue.	Expenditure.
1847	£3,960,570	£2,203,054	£416,569	£376,456
1848	2,629,584	2,302,830	312,037	389,992
1849	2,468,120	2,193,678	421,998	370,613
1850	3,489,466	2,457,886	578,822	437,312
1851	4,404,409	2,663,933	692,206	521,643
1852	4,168,457	2,832,213	723,724	535,171
1853	6,522,527	4,523,260	982,334	611,667

—Lord ELGIN's Report, Quebec, 18th December 1854.

	1841. Bushels.	1847. Bushels.	1854. Bushels.
† Wheat crop, Upper Canada,	3,321,991	7,558,773	12,692,892
„ Lower Canada,	942,835	2,172,149	3,675,868
	4,262,826	9,730,922	15,778,760

British imports to Canada in 1854, £2,475,643 Value. • Population.
to United States, 1,874,211 1,842,265, or £1, 6s. per head.

Shipping built at Quebec in 1843, 13,785 tons; 1851, 41,505 tons.

—Lord ELGIN's Despatch, 22d December 1852.

‡ According to a return presented to Parliament in March 1863, the population of Canada now is 2,506,755; while in 1860 its imports were £7,076,842; its exports, £7,116,141; its revenue (raised in the colony) £1,498,528; and its debt, £11,970,904.

trade in Great Britain in 1816; the immense emigration from these islands in the five years immediately preceding 1853, a large part of which went to Canada, and contributed essentially to the growth of the province; and the gold discoveries in California and Australia, which, since 1852, have added 50 per cent to the value of its produce—exports and imports.* But giving full effect to the influence of these causes, which without doubt were the mainspring of Canadian prosperity, it seems, at the same time, not unreasonable to conclude that much also is to be ascribed to the establishment, in 1841, of a form of government essentially democratic, and therefore suited to the circumstances of the country, and calculated to soften down, and at length extinguish, its unhappy rivalry of races. There is much truth in the observation of Lord Elgin, whose liberal and enlightened administration has done so much to heal the divisions, and permit the expansion of the material resources of the province, that “in a society singularly democratic in its structure, where diversities of race supplied special elements of confusion, and where, consequently, it was most important that constituted authority should be respected, the moral influence of Government was enfeebled by the existence of perpetual strife between the powers that ought to have afforded each other mutual support. No state of affairs could be imagined less favourable to the extinction of national animosities, and to the firm establishment of the gentle and benignant control of those liberal institutions which it is England’s pride and privilege to bestow upon her children.”

• 38. But in truth there is more in

* EMIGRANTS WHO ARRIVED AT QUEBEC
FROM 1847 TO 1854.

1847,	90,150	1852,	39,176
1848,	27,939	1853,	
1849,	38,494	1854,	54,112
1850,	32,292		
1851,	41,076	In eight years,	360,238

Besides a large number who landed at New York, and found their way across the frontier into the Canadian provinces.—Lord ELGIN’S Report, December 16, 1854.

the case than even these eloquent words convey; and it may with safety be affirmed, not only that a popular form of government is the one best adapted to rising colonial settlements, but that it is the one indispensable to their growth and prosperity. There is no example in the history of mankind of a despotic government having formed real colonies, or of those offshoots of civilisation ever attaining a robust growth but under practically republican institutions. The colonies of Greece and Rome were as numerous and prosperous in ancient times, as those of Great Britain and Holland have been in modern: but colonisation died away under the imperial sceptre; it has never proceeded from the despotisms of the East; and though France and Spain have made brilliant colonial conquests, they have never founded real colonies. The reason is, that the warfare of man in infant colonies is with the desert or the forest, not with the property or influence of his neighbours, which is what in after times renders a strong and real government indispensable. The energy and independence which make him penetrate the woods, render him confident in himself and impatient of the control of others; the submission and contentment which are essential to the peace of aged society, are fatal to its commencement in those solitary regions. Self-government is the want of man in such circumstances, because isolation is his destiny, and plenty his accompaniment. The government of others becomes necessary in later times, because he is surrounded by numbers, and the abundance of rude has been succeeded by the privations of civilised life.

39. It is the more evident that the popular government, which has succeeded the rebellions and union of the provinces in Canada, has been eminently favourable to the development of its energies and resources, that its present extraordinary prosperity is of recent growth, and has chiefly arisen since its establishment. Twenty years ago the case was just the reverse; and the backward condition and neglected

natural riches of Canada presented a strange and mortifying contrast to the opposite condition of the adjoining provinces of the United States, which attracted the notice of every traveller. "The superiority of the condition of our republican neighbours," said Lord Durham in 1838, "is perceivable throughout the whole extent of our North American territory. Even the ancient city of Montreal will not bear a comparison with Buffalo, a creation of yesterday. There is but one railroad in all British North America—that between Lake Champlain and the St Lawrence—and it is *only fifteen miles long*. The people on the frontier are poor and scattered, separated by vast forests, without towns or markets, and almost destitute of roads, living in mean houses, and without apparent means of improving their condition. On the American side, on the other hand, all is activity and bustle. The forest has been widely cleared; every year numerous settlements are formed, and thousands of farms created out of the waste. The country is intersected by common roads; canals and railroads are finished, or in course of formation. The observer is surprised at the number of harbours on the lakes, and the multitude of vessels they contain; while bridges, artificial landing-places, and commodious wharves, are formed in all directions as soon as required. Good houses, mills, inns, warehouses, villages, towns, and even great cities, are almost seen to spring out of the desert. Every village has its school-house and place of public worship; every town has many of both, with its township buildings, book-stores, and probably one or two banks and newspapers; and the cities, with their fine churches, great hotels, great exchanges, court-houses, and municipal halls of stone and marble, so new and fresh as to mark the recent existence of the forest where they now stand, would be admired in any part of the world."

40. What a contrast does this graphic description present to the present condition of the British provinces of North America! The picture drawn

in 1838 by Lord Durham of the American shore, might pass for a faithful portrait of the British at present (1864). Individual enterprise has been fostered by public encouragement; magnificent undertakings by Government have formed the arteries of prosperity through the state; and the forest has, in an incredibly short space of time, under the influence of such stimulants over a wide extent, yielded its virgin riches to the efforts of laborious man. Where, twenty years ago, *only one* railway, fifteen miles long, existed, *thirteen millions* of British capital have now been expended on railway communication; a vast system of internal lines renders commerce alike independent of the obstacles of nature and the hostility of man; and a gigantic bridge, rivalling the greatest works of antiquity, will long attract future generations to the romantic shores of the St Lawrence. Nor have these generous aids from the Government and riches of the mother country been thrown away upon an ungrateful people. Political divisions have in a great measure ceased in that prosperous land; even the rancour of religious hostility has been, comparatively speaking, appeased; loyalty to the British throne, attachment to the British connection, have become universal. During the darkest periods of the Russian war, the Canadians stood faithfully by our side; they subscribed generously to the Patriotic Fund, intended to alleviate the distresses with which it was accompanied; they offered battalions of volunteers to share our dangers; and the fall of Sebastopol was celebrated with greater enthusiasm in Quebec and Montreal than either in London or Dublin. When the American outrage on the Trent, in 1861, brought the United States and Great Britain to the verge of war, the Canadian provinces stood forth as one man in support of the mother country. These unequivocal proofs of undiminished loyalty in this noble portion of the British people, encourage the pleasing hope that the bonds which unite them to the parent state may be long, very long, of being severed; that the

advantages of real self-government may in their case be united with the chivalrous feelings of attachment to the throne; that mutual benefit may perpetuate a union commenced from a sense of mutual dependence; and that, when at length it comes, as come it will, from the greatness of the younger state, to be dissolved, it may not be violently severed, but insensibly wear away, like the sway of parental authority in a united family, and melt into a PERPETUAL AND INDISSOLUBLE ALLIANCE.*

* It is painful to be obliged to add that the statesman to whose wisdom and firmness, more than that of any other single individual in existence, this marvellous progress is to be ascribed, and whose suggestions were all embodied in the constitution and union of the provinces which have finally given peace to Canada, fell a victim to the efforts he had made on behalf of his country. To remarkable talents, which his report on Canada unequivocally demonstrates, Lord Durham united the magnanimity and lofty spirit which form an essential part in the heroic character. Unfortunately he possessed also the love of approbation and sensitiveness to blame which are the predominant features in the female disposition. He was impatient of contradiction, and irritable when thwarted; and those failings, which in ordinary life would scarcely have been observed, proved fatal to him on the stormy eminence on which he was ultimately placed. His mortification at the disallowance of his ordinances was extreme, and it preyed upon a constitution naturally weak, to such a degree as to bring him to an untimely grave. He was busily engaged with his official duties to the very last, and the night before his departure he drew up an important proclamation relative to squatters on the crown-lands. Thousands accompanied him to the quay when he embarked, and every eye strained after the vessel—the *Inconstant*—as it made its way down the river in the gloom of a Canadian snow-storm. He landed at Plymouth, on December 1st, *without any honours*, by the special orders of Government, who sent down a special messenger to prohibit them; but he was amply indemnified by the respect paid to him by the people, and the tokens of affection and confidence given him during his journey to London. Lady Durham, Earl Grey's daughter, immediately resigned her situation in the Queen's household: but the ingratitude of his party made no difference in the political sentiments and conduct of her husband, who was consistent to the last. • But his race was run—his heart was broken; and he died on 28th July 1840, the victim of ingratitude from a party on whom he had conferred the most essential services.—*Ann. Reg.* 1840; *Chron.* 173. MARTINEAU, II. 390, 391.

41. Canada was not the only portion of the British dominions which was convulsed during the disastrous years 1838 and 1839. The WEST INDIES also shared in the convulsion; and so great was the discontent there, that it was prevented only by absolute impotence from breaking into open rebellion. The apprentice system, as had been predicted by all really acquainted with the circumstances, had entirely failed in practice, and produced, instead of quiet and contentment, a degree of irritation on all sides, which had now risen to such a height as rendered its abandonment indispensable. It could not possibly be otherwise. The negroes thought they had been really emancipated by the Imperial Legislature, and that the full fruition of their rights was only prevented by the selfish conduct of the planters and local parliaments; hence continual contention and discord. The negroes could be made to work in many cases only by actual compulsion; and such was their aversion to this supposed invasion of their rights, that more stripes were inflicted by the police magistrates during the nominal freedom of the apprentice system than had been done during the reality of slavery. These melancholy tidings speedily reached Great Britain, and revived the public agitation in all its intensity. Public meetings were held on all sides, in which the immediate and entire abolition of slavery was loudly demanded. Government gave proof of their belief in the reality of these evils; for they introduced, in the early part of 1838, a bill “to give full effect to the intent and meaning of the Act for the abolition of slavery;” and its provisions show how little had hitherto been gained for the cause of humanity by the emancipation of which so much had been said. It declares “that it shall no longer be lawful to place any female apprentice on a treadmill, or on the chain of a penal gang of any parish, or to punish any female apprentice by whipping or beating her person, or by cutting off her hair, for any offence by her committed.” The bill contained also stringent provisions

prohibiting corporal punishment on any male apprentice, except in presence of a magistrate specially summoned for the occasion.

42. Lord Brongham, who was the mouthpiece of the anti-slavery party, which had become violently excited on the recital of these severities, gave a still more melancholy account of the increased horrors of the middle passage and augmentation of the slave trade, in consequence of the nominal emancipation of the English negroes, and the real stimulus given to the foreign slave colonies. On occasion of presenting a petition for immediate emancipation, on 19th January 1838, he said: "The accursed traffic flourishes under the very expedients adopted to crush it, and increases in consequence of the very measures adopted for its extinction. So far from our efforts materially checking it, I find that the bulk of this infernal commerce is undiminished. The premium of insurance at the Havannah on slave-ships is no more than 12½ per cent to cover all risks. Of this 4½ per cent is allowed for the usual sea risk, leaving only 8 per cent to meet the chances of capture. In 1835 eighty slave-ships sailed from the Havannah alone, and six of them brought back an average of 360 slaves; so that 28,000 were brought to that port alone in the year. In December of the same year, between 4000 and 5000 were safely landed at Rio. One of the ships carried 570, another no less than 700 slaves. Of all the criminals engaged in this accursed traffic, the Spaniards, the Portuguese, and the Brazilians are the greatest—the three nations with whom our influence is the most commanding, and our commerce the most intimate and profitable.

43. "Lamentable as this increase of the slave trade is, the horrors attending its carrying-out are still more heartrending. The cruiser intrusted

She stands out, therefore, just so far as to command a view of the port from the mast-head, being herself quite out

of sight. The slaver, believing the coast to be clear, accomplishes his crime and makes sail. Let us see how the unavoidable miseries of the middle passage are exasperated by the contraband nature of the adventure—how the unavoidable mischief is aggravated by the means taken to extirpate it. Every consideration is sacrificed to swiftness of sailing in the construction of the slave-ships, which are built so narrow as to put their safety in peril, being made just broad enough on the beam to keep the sea. What is the consequence to the slaves? Before the trade was put down in 1807, the slaves had the benefit of what was termed 'the Slave-carrying Act,' which gave the unhappy victims the benefit of a certain space between the decks, in which they might breathe the tainted air more freely, and a certain supply of water. But now there is nothing of the kind, and the slave is in the condition in which our debates found him half a century ago, when the venerable Clarkson awakened the world to his sufferings.

44. "The scantiest portion of food which will support life is alone provided; and the wretched Africans are compressed and stowed away in every nook and cranny of the ship, as if they were dead goods concealed on board smuggling vessels. On being discovered, the slaver has to determine whether he will endeavour to regain his port or will push on across the Atlantic, reaching the American shores with a part at least of his lading. No sooner does the miscreant find that the cruiser is gaining upon him, than he bethinks him of lightening the ship, and casts overboard men, women, and children. Does he first knock off their fetters? No! because these irons, by which they have been held together in couples for safety, are not screwed together and padlocked, so as to be removed in case of danger from tempest or fire, but they are riveted—welded together by the blacksmith in his forge, never to be removed or loosened until, after the horrors of the middle passage, the children of misery shall be landed to bondage in the civilised world. The

irons, too, serve the purpose of weights; and if time be allowed, more weights are added, to the end that the wretches may be entangled, to prevent their swimming. Nor is this all. Instances have been recorded of other precautions for the same purpose. Water-casks have been filled with human beings, and one vessel threw twelve overboard thus laden. In one chase, two slave-ships endeavoured, but in vain, to make their escape, and in the attempt they flung five hundred human beings into the sea, of all ages and either sex."

45. The Duke of Wellington and Lord Glenelg acquitted Lord Brougham of all exaggeration in this harrowing statement, which affords a melancholy picture of the aggravation of real evils by rash and ill-judged efforts for their removal. The true way to put down the trade in slaves was to make it not worth while for any one to import them, and this could only be done by rendering the labour of the slaves already settled in the West Indies *so productive that no additions to their number were required*. Instead of this, the emancipation of the negroes, by rendering their labour less productive, increased the demand for slaves in the slave colonies of other states, and thus fearfully extended this infernal traffic. But though this was clearly pointed out at the time, yet there was no getting the public to be disabused on the subject. They persisted in holding that the labour of freemen was more productive than that of slaves, and that the slave trade would be at once abolished by the extinction of slavery in the British West India islands. So violent did the clamour become, and so unequivocally was it manifested in the large constituencies, that the planters, who had already suffered severely from the refractory spirit of the slaves, and the difficulty of getting them to submit to continuous labour, took the only course which in the circumstances remained open to them; and on the recommendation of Sir Lionel Smith, the governor of Jamaica, the parliament of that island abolished the apprentice system altogether, and

declared all the negroes free on an early day. The provincial legislatures of all the other islands adopted the same course, and on the 1st August 1838 SLAVERY ENTIRELY CEASED IN THE BRITISH COLONIES.

46. Sir Lionel Smith transmitted to Government the following account of the manner in which this great change was received in Jamaica: "It is impossible for me to do justice to the good order, decorum, and gratitude which the whole of the labouring population manifested upon this happy occasion. Not even the irregularity of a drunken individual occurred. Though joy beamed in every countenance, it was throughout the island tempered with solemn thankfulness to God; and the churches and chapels were everywhere filled with these happy people, in humble offering of praise for the great blessing He had conferred upon them." The Bishop of Jamaica bore similar testimony: "I had long known," said he, "the objects of this benevolent measure as the most patient, enduring, and long-suffering upon earth, and not easily provoked; but it was not until the actual promulgation of this great and glorious measure of justice and mercy that I was enabled fully to appreciate this advance in Christian principles. The quiet manner in which the whole has passed off has added much to the general effect, and made a deep impression on men's minds."

47. It is a noble spectacle to see a great nation voluntarily repairing wrong by a great act of mercy; and it is doubly so when that act was not done at the expense merely of others, but that a lasting and heavy burden had been undertaken by it to indemnify the immediate sufferers by the change. The immediate results of emancipation did not belie these flattering appearances; and nearly two months after the change, Sir Lionel Smith wrote to the Colonial Secretary (September 24, 1838), that "experience had now established two important facts: first, that the negroes were willing, and even eager, to work for fair remuneration; and that so far from

their resorting to the woods, to squat in idleness, as had been predicted, they submitted to the most galling oppression rather than be driven from their homes." But unhappily these flattering appearances were as shortlived as they were fallacious; and negro emancipation remains a lasting proof that great alterations in human affairs are not to be made with the rapidity of changes of scene on the opera stage. To be enduring they must be as slow and imperceptible as the revolutions of nature. Before many months had elapsed, it was found that, though willing to work occasionally when it suited their inclinations to do so, yet the negroes were averse to *continuous* labour, and demanded such high wages for what they did perform, as rendered it more than doubtful whether cultivation at such rates could be carried on at a profit. Eight or nine dollars a-month for working five days in the week, of nine hours each, besides house and garden-ground, came soon to be the wages generally demanded, and in many cases given. These rates, however, were soon found to be higher than the price of sugar, reduced as it was by the heavy import-duty and contraction of the currency in Great Britain, could afford. Thence ensued combinations, among labourers to raise their wages, which were strongly supported by the Baptist missionaries, who warmly sympathised with the feelings of their sable flocks; and among the planters to get them down, who were as strongly urged on by stern necessity. Disorder and violence succeeded as a matter of course, which both seriously impeded the progress of rural labour, and engendered an angry feeling between employer and employed, occasioning frequent collisions, which all the efforts of the stipendiary magistracy were unable to prevent.

48. Matters were brought to a crisis in Jamaica and the other islands by the promulgation of an Act passed in the Imperial Parliament in 1838, laying down new regulations for the management of prisons in the colony, and empowering Ministers to dismiss cer-

tain persons from the offices they held in them. This Act excited a universal storm; and the Jamaica legislature having assembled on the 30th October, their first act was to pass a resolution that this Act was a violation of their rights as British subjects; that it should not have the force of law; and that till it was repealed they would desist from all their legislative functions, except such as might be indispensable for the public credit. This resolution was carried by 24 to 5. Upon this the Assembly was prorogued; and as it again, on 8th November, adhered to the resolution, Sir Lionel Smith dissolved the angry assemblage. "No House of Assembly," said he, "can now be found which will acknowledge the authority of Queen, Lords, and Commons to enact laws for Jamaica, or that will be likely to pass just and prudent laws for a large portion of the negro population lately brought into freedom." The new Assembly met on December 18, but the first thing it did was to pass a resolution adhering to the former one. Upon this it also was dissolved under circumstances of violence, which forcibly recalled the similar scenes in the Long Parliament. In a word, Jamaica, like Canada, was now on the border of insurrection; and nothing but its obvious impotence against Great Britain, and the extreme pecuniary embarrassments of the proprietors in the island in consequence of the contraction of the currency at home, and the difficulty of getting the negroes to work on their estates, prevented a civil war, as in North America, from breaking out.

49. It is impossible to defend the extreme violence of the language which, on some of these occasions, was used by the West India planters; which was the more reprehensible that they had in reality a good cause to defend, which required no intemperance of expression for its support. Experience has now demonstrated this in the most unequivocal manner. The measures of the Imperial Parliament had brought ruin upon the West India planters, and the emancipation of the

negroes was the last drop which made the cup of misery overflow. The insuperable difficulty which in every age has rendered the West India question so embarrassing is, that Europeans who will work for wages are destroyed by the heat of the climate, and that the Africans, who do not suffer from it, will not work unless forced to do so. It is probable that the wit of man to the end of the world will hardly discover an exit from this dilemma, but either by the abandonment of cultivation in the tropical regions, or by the retention of slavery, at least in a modified form, in them. But the English Parliament, impelled by the loud clamour of a vast numerical majority in the British Islands, who were actuated solely by feeling and passion, without either knowledge or experience, thought they had discovered a shorthand way of solving the difficulty by instantly emancipating the negroes, and trusting to their alleged readiness to work as freemen at days' wages for the continuance of cultivation in the West Indies. The result is now fully ascertained.* Though not averse to occasional labour at high wages, the African cannot be brought to submit to the steady continued effort requisite to carry on cultivation in the tropical regions. This is now sufficiently demonstrated by experience: the amount of agricultural produce raised in the West Indies had sunk to *less than a half* of what it had been in 1828, within three years after final emancipation; and the export of British manufactures to them, the measure of their material comforts, had diminished in an alarming proportion. Nothing was wanting to complete their ruin but the removal of protecting duties, and the admission of foreign slave-grown sugar on terms approaching to equality; and this was ere long conceded to the loud demand of the same party which had insisted for immediate emancipation. The effects of this latter measure, and the lamentable impulse it has given to the foreign slave-trade in its worst and most atrocious form, will form an interesting and instructive topic in a future chapter.

50. This violent collision between the British Government and the West Indian colonies has acquired greater celebrity than would have otherwise belonged to it, from its having induced a conflict of parties which rendered necessary a resignation of Ministers, and occasioned the first serious shock to the Whig power, thought to be permanently secured by the Reform Bill. Since the accession of Queen Victoria, Ministers had never been able to command a majority of more than 25 or 30 on any vital question; but being cordially supported by the

* EXPORTS AND SHIPPING FROM BRITISH WEST INDIES, AND EXPORTS OF BRITISH MANUFACTURES TO THEM.

Years.	Sugar.	Rum.	Coffee.	Shipping.	British Manufactures Exported: Declared Value.
	Cwt.	Null.	Lb	Tons	£
1828	4,213,636	5,620,174	29,987,078	272,800	3,289,704
1829	4,152,614	6,307,294	26,911,785	263,268	3,612,085
1836	3,601,791	4,868,168	18,903,426	237,922	3,786,453
1837	3,306,775	4,418,349	15,577,888	226,468	3,456,745
1838	3,520,676	4,641,210	17,538,655	253,495	3,993,441
1839	2,824,372	4,021,820	11,485,675	196,715	3,986,598
1840	2,214,764	3,780,979	12,797,039	181,731	3,574,970
1841	2,151,217	2,770,161	9,927,689	174,975	2,504,004
1854	3,443,190	7,184,966	3,536,509	...	1,870,674
1855	2,915,592	7,160,105	3,083,564	..	1,811,390
1856	2,810,648	5,838,797	2,132,532	..	1,873,397

—PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, 3d edit., pp. 360, 367, and 803; M'CULLOCH'S *Commercial Dictionary*, edit. of 1860, pp. 348, 713.

Sovereign, and aware that the balance of parties had now become such that a larger majority could not for a very long period be expected by either, they still, and not without reason, retained office. Sir R. Peel, who with equal talent and judgment led the Opposition, was wisely desirous not to precipitate matters, and supported Ministers on all occasions when any motion perilous to the monarchy or existing institutions was brought forward. Thus the Government had gone on since the accession of the Queen, existing, as it were, on the sufferance of its opponents, but still retaining such a majority in the Lower House as rendered it unadvisable for their adversaries in the mean time to dispossess them of power.

51. Ministers, however, felt much irritated at the pertinacious resistance of the Assembly in Jamaica to their measures relative to the West Indies; and even if they had been otherwise disposed, the urban constituencies were so violently excited on the subject, that it was probably impossible to delay any longer some very stringent measure of coercion. Mr Labouchere, accordingly, on 9th April 1839, brought forward the Government measure on the subject, which was nothing less than a suspension of the constitution of the island for five years, and vesting the government of it, in the mean time, in the Governor and Council, and three commissioners to be sent from England, to assist in the consideration of the topics to which their early consideration would be directed, particularly the improvement of the negroes, prison discipline, and the establishment of poor-laws. This bill was opposed by the whole strength of the Opposition; and the vote on it produced a crisis which all but overturned the Administration.

52. On the part of Government, it was argued by Mr Labouchere, Sir George Grey, and Lord John Russell: "Previous to the act of emancipation, the state of prison discipline was of little importance, as all punishments were inflicted on the slaves by

the domestic authority of the master, who was unwilling to lose the benefit of his services by sending him to jail. This state of things, however, ceased when slavery came to an end; and in addition to that, the existing prison regulations terminated when the apprenticeship ceased, which rendered a new prison bill a matter of necessity. Nevertheless, it is a measure which was in vain sought to be enforced by five successive applications to the colonial Assembly. In fact, from the passing of the celebrated resolutions of 1822 down to the present moment, not a single measure has been adopted in furtherance of these objects for the relief of the slaves, that has not been forced upon the House of Assembly by the Imperial Parliament, with the exception of the Emancipation Bill of 1833, purchased by the noble sacrifice of this country. Three distinct occasions have arisen since that period, on which our interference had been found necessary:—when we extended the duration of that Act for a year; when we carried the Apprenticeship Amendment Bill; when we passed the Prison Bill: and the present difference is only part of the controversy that has been so long in existence between the two legislatures with regard to the treatment of the negro population.

53. "After five years' experience of the fruitlessness of all recommendations to the House of Assembly, Ministers had felt bound, in accordance with the spirit of the resolution of last session of Parliament, to ask for power to dismiss improper persons from offices which they had abused in the prisons,—a power absolutely necessary to the due discharge of the responsibility with which Government was intrusted. The Act was not sought to be forced on the colony; on the contrary, its adoption was recommended only in the most conciliatory manner. All the customary formalities were studiously observed in bringing it forward; but when submitted, it was met at once with a decided negative. In addition to this, the violent and vituperative language

of the Jamaica Assembly formed no inconsiderable argument for such a temporary suspension of its functions as might give them time to recover their temper, and enable them to discharge with propriety their legislative functions. If something of this sort was not done, the authority of Great Britain over its colonies would be speedily lost, and every little island that owed its existence to the protection afforded by the Imperial Government, would not scruple to set its power at defiance."

54. On the other hand, it was maintained by Sir R. Peel, Lord Stanley, and Mr Gladstone: "Without pretending to justify the violent language used by the Jamaica Assembly in May, yet it is doubtful whether the bill now under consideration is either justified by its antecedents, or recommended by its probable consequences. In a country which had been accustomed always to impose its own taxations, it is in contemplation to vest in a governor and council, and three commissioners appointed by the Crown, authority to levy taxes to the amount of £500,000 a-year; and that too at the very time when Lord Durham, in his report on Canada, has recommended them to make the executive officers of that colony responsible, not to the Crown or the home Government, but to the colonial Assembly. Is it likely that we shall advance the cause of negro emancipation throughout the world, and especially in the United States, by thus proclaiming that it is inconsistent with responsible government, and that the first thing which must be done after its adoption is to destroy the political rights of the State by which it has been adopted? Many considerations urge us to consider maturely whether no other alternative exists, in the present posture of affairs, than the entire abolition of the Jamaica constitution. The insolent language of the Assembly cannot be justly pleaded in justification of such an extreme measure; for what popular government could be maintained for an hour if that ground were held sufficient? The Jamaica Assem-

bly had no slight grounds of provocation. When it was proposed last year to remit the remaining term of apprenticeship, Ministers very properly met the demand with a refusal, alleging with truth that the national faith was pledged to its continuance for the entire term of seven years. Yet, in the very next year, Sir Lionel Smith, on the part of Government, urged on the Jamaica Assembly that they ought to terminate the apprenticeship themselves. Finding then the executive government combined with the influence of numbers at home, no option was left to them but to do what the Government at home had refused to sanction, and abolish the apprenticeship. This is the real cause of difference between the two legislatures, and on this account the colonial Assembly is entitled to some little indulgence.

55. "'There are,' said Mr Canning in 1824, 'three possible modes in which the Parliament might deal with the people of Jamaica. By the application of direct force we might crush them with a finger; we might harass them with penal regulations restraining their navigation; or we might pursue the slow and steady course of authoritative admonition. I am for trying first that which I have last mentioned; I hope we shall never be driven to the second. And with respect to the first, I trust that no feeling of wounded pride, no motive of questionable expedience — nothing short of real and demonstrable necessity, shall induce me to moot the awful question of the transcendental power of Parliament over every dependency of the British Crown. That transcendental power is an arcanum of the empire, which ought to be kept back within the penetralia of the constitution. It exists, but it should be veiled. It should not be produced in cases of petty refractoriness, nor indeed on any occasion short of the utmost extremity of the State.' Adopting the sentiments of this great statesman, are we prepared to assert that the occasion which has now occurred is one in which the necessity appears

of bringing the transcendental power from the penetralia of the temple? Devoutly is it to be wished that the House may be made to perceive the probable consequences of the double precedent now about to be set, and the general uneasiness which will prevail. The violent step now under consideration is proposed to be applied to half the whole white population in the British colonies in the West Indies and South America. The whole public revenue of these dependencies is £540,000; that of Jamaica alone is £300,000. The value of our imports into these colonies in 1838 was (official) £5,806,000; that of Jamaica alone, £3,000,000. The exports from our South American and West Indian colonies were laid at £9,932,000. Such is the importance of the colonies into which it is now proposed to throw the firebrand of discord, by at once stripping the most important of them of their whole rights as British citizens!"

56. The debate was protracted through several nights, and counsel were heard at great length against the bill. The division took place at five in the morning of 6th May; and although Ministers were supported by the whole of the Irish Catholic and Scotch Liberal members, which made up their usual majority, they had on this occasion only one of FIVE, the numbers being 294 to 289. So small a majority upon a vital question necessarily drew after it a resignation by Ministers; for, deducting the members of the Cabinet who had a seat in the House, they were actually in a minority. It was a matter of no surprise, therefore, when Lord John Russell announced on the 7th May that Ministers had tendered their resignation, which had been accepted by her Majesty. The reasons assigned by him for this step were, that the vote which had passed must weaken the authority of the Crown in the colonies, by giving support to the contumacy of Jamaica, encourage others of them to follow the bad example of its Assembly, and render impossible the measures which they had in contemplation

for the settlement of the affairs of Upper and Lower Canada.

57. Although these reasons, thus publicly assigned, appeared abundantly sufficient to justify the step which had been taken, yet they were not the real ones. Other and more pressing remained behind, which, perhaps with more candour than prudence, were on a subsequent night stated by Lord Melbourne in the House of Lords. "I should be exceedingly sorry if the accusation could be justly made against me of abandoning my post in circumstances of difficulty or danger. When I was removed from office in 1835, I stated, in reply to various addresses presented to me, that disunions among its supporters had broken up the Administration, and that nothing but the most complete co-operation of all who in any degree thought with us could re-establish us in power, or maintain us there for any length of time, if re-established then. The union I advised has subsisted for a considerable length of time, but at length it has been broken up; and considering that there was so much discord among my supporters as to render it impossible for me to conduct the Government efficiently, and for the good of the country, I resigned my office. A great change has lately taken place in the constitution, which has excited considerable alarm in the minds of many who had great experience and knowledge in public affairs. One of the ablest and most experienced statesmen in Europe gave it as his opinion, with respect to these changes, 'They may do very well in times of peace, when there is no financial difficulty; but should we be involved in war, and feel the pressure of pecuniary embarrassment, you will see how your new constitution will work.' Unless there be a due regard to the dictates of common sense in the country, that difficulty will be hard to meet. I will not attempt to decide which of the parties which divide the country is the better fitted to govern it; but I will quote a remark of William III., a man of most prudent, simple, and sagacious mind. 'I do not know,'

said he to Bishop Barnard, 'whether a monarchy or a republic be the better form of government; much may be said on either side: but I can tell you that which is the worst—a monarchy which has not the power to put in effect the measures necessary for the good of the people.'"

58. As a matter of course, the Queen, upon the resignation of Lord Melbourne, sent for the Duke of Wellington, the last premier of the party which had now displaced its adversaries; and he recommended to her Majesty to send for Sir R. Peel, upon the ground that, situated as the constitution now was, the leader of the Government should be in the House of Commons. Sir Robert, accordingly, was sent for, and on entering the royal cabinet he was informed by her Majesty, who acted throughout the whole transaction in the most candid and honourable manner, "that she had parted with her late Ministers with great regret, as they had given her entire satisfaction." Yielding, however, to the conditions of a constitutional monarchy, she tendered to him the formation of a Cabinet, which he accepted, at the same time stating the difficulties which any new Ministry would have to encounter. He accordingly conferred with his immediate friends, and next day laid before her Majesty a list of persons whom he designed to form part of the new Cabinet, embracing the Duke of Wellington, Lord Lyndhurst, Lord Aberdeen, Lord Ellenborough, Lord Stanley, Sir James Graham, Sir Henry Hardinge, and Mr Goulburn. The Duke of Wellington desired a seat in the Cabinet and the lead in the House of Lords, without office; but the Queen wished that he should hold some important situation, to which wish his Grace would doubtless have at once acceded. Some progress had been made in filling up the principal offices, when the negotiation was abruptly brought to a close by a difficulty about certain ladies in her Majesty's household, which ended in reinstating the Whig Government in power.

59. So little had the new Premier

anticipated any difficulty on this subject, that at the first conference with her Majesty he did not even mention it to her; and it was only on turning to the Red Book, after conferring with some of his proposed colleagues, that he found that the two ladies holding the highest situations in the Queen's household were the wife of Lord Normanby and the sister of Lord Morpeth, the nobleman most opposed to him in politics. Upon this he stated that he hoped these exalted ladies would resign, but that if they did not, he must propose their removal, in the necessity of which his colleagues acquiesced. When the subject, however, was brought before her Majesty on the following morning, she stated that she would consent to no change in the ladies of her household, erroneously conceiving that what Sir Robert intended was the change of *all* the ladies of the royal establishment. Sir Robert, however, remained firm, conceiving, as he afterwards stated in the House, that taking into view the difficulties of his position, having to contend with a hostile majority in the House of Commons, and very great embarrassment in Ireland and the colonies, he could not carry on the government with advantage to the country, unless cordially supported, or at least not thwarted, by those who enjoyed her Majesty's confidence. The Queen's advisers, consisting of the late Cabinet, conceived that this was an unwonted and unjustifiable encroachment on the control, which naturally belonged to her, of the ladies of her own household; and accordingly, after written communications to this effect, drawn on the Queen's side by Lord Melbourne's Cabinet, had been interchanged, the negotiation broke off, Lord Melbourne was sent for, and the whole Whig Ministry were reinstated in power, in the situations they had respectively held before their resignations.*

60. From the failure of the attempt to construct a Ministry upon Con-

* "BUCKINGHAM PALACE, May 10, 1839.—The Queen having considered the proposal made to her yesterday by Sir R. Peel, to remove the ladies of her Bedchamber, cannot

servative principles on a matter apparently so slight as the Ladies of the Bedchamber, it is evident that Sir R. Peel was by no means sanguine as to the success of his mission, nor annoyed at the failure of the attempt to fulfil it. He himself said shortly afterwards in Parliament, that "his difficulties were not Canada, they were not Jamaica; his difficulties were *Ireland*." Lord Melbourne observed in the House of Peers: "I frankly declare that I resume office unequivocally, and solely for this reason, that I will not abandon my Sovereign in a situation of difficulty and distress, and especially when a demand is made upon her Majesty with which I think she ought not to comply—a demand inconsistent with her personal honour, and which, if acquiesced in, would render her reign liable to all the changes and variations of political parties, and her domestic life one constant scene of unhappiness and discomfort." And the Duke of Wellington said: "It is essential that the Minister should

possess the entire confidence of her Majesty, and with that view should exercise the usual control permitted to the Minister by the Sovereign in the construction of the household. There is the greatest possible difference between the *household of the Queen-consort and the household of the Queen-regnant*; that of the former, who is not a political personage, being comparatively of little importance."

61. The first trying question which awaited the Ministry after their resumption of office, was the election of a Speaker, in consequence of the resignation of Mr Abercromby, who had held it for four years, on the ground of ill health. Two candidates, both unexceptionable in point of qualification, were proposed—Mr Shaw Lefevre by the Ministry, Mr Goulburn by the Opposition. The former was carried by a majority of 18, which might be considered as a fair test, at that period, of the comparative strength of parties in the

consent to adopt a course which she conceives to be contrary to usage, and which is repugnant to her feelings."

To this communication Sir R. Peel, the same forenoon, returned the following answer: "Sir R. Peel presents his humble duty to your Majesty, and has had the honour of receiving your Majesty's note of this morning. Sir R. Peel trusts that your Majesty will permit him to state to your Majesty his impression with respect to the circumstances which have led to the termination of his attempt to form an Administration for the conduct of your Majesty's service.

"In the interview with which your Majesty honoured Sir R. Peel yesterday morning, after he had submitted to your Majesty the names of those he proposed to recommend to your Majesty for the principal executive appointments, he mentioned to your Majesty his earnest wish to be enabled, by your Majesty's sanction, so to constitute your Majesty's household that your Majesty's confidential servants might have the advantage of a public demonstration of your Majesty's full support and confidence; and at the same time, so far as possible consistently with such demonstration, each individual appointment in the household should be entirely acceptable to your Majesty's personal feelings. On your Majesty's expressing a desire that the Earl of Liverpool should hold an office in the household, Sir R. Peel immediately requested your Majesty's permission at once to confer on Lord Liverpool the office of Lord Steward, or any other office which he might

prefer. Sir R. Peel then observed that he should have every wish to apply a similar principle to the chief appointments which are filled by the ladies of your Majesty's household; upon which your Majesty was pleased to remark, 'that you must retain the whole of these appointments, and that it was your Majesty's pleasure that the whole should continue as at present without any change.' The Duke of Wellington, in the interview to which your Majesty subsequently admitted him, understood also that this was your Majesty's determination, and concurred with Sir R. Peel in opinion, that considering the great difficulties of the present crisis, and the expediency of making every effort, in the first instance, to conduct the public business of the country with the aid of the present Parliament, it was essential to the success of the mission with which your Majesty had honoured Sir R. Peel, that he should have such public proof of your Majesty's entire support and confidence, which would be afforded by the permission to make some changes in your Majesty's household, which your Majesty resolved on maintaining entirely without change. Having had the opportunity, through your Majesty's gracious consideration, of reflecting upon this point, he humbly submits to your Majesty that he is reluctantly compelled, by a sense of public duty, and of the interest of your Majesty's service, to adhere to the opinion which he ventured to express to your Majesty."—*Parl. Deb.*, xlvii. 985; and *Ann. Reg.* 1830, pp. 121, 122.

House of Commons. Government, however, were not so fortunate in their next measure, which was a second Jamaica Bill. It was strongly opposed in the Commons by Sir R. Peel, and only carried by a majority of 10. In the Lords it was reduced to the shape for which Sir R. Peel had contended in the Lower House. As so amended, it allowed time to the Jamaica Assembly to re-enact the usual laws, without which the busi-

ness of the island could not proceed, and invested the Governor and Council with power to re-enact these laws in the event of the Assembly separating without renewing them. In this form the bill passed the House of Lords, and was accepted by the Jamaica Assembly;—"a measure," said Lord J. Russell, "in its present state, not nearly so effective as I could wish, and only better than none."

CHAPTER XLV.

ENGLAND, FROM THE RESTORATION OF THE WHIG MINISTRY IN
MAY 1839 TO THEIR FALL IN AUGUST 1841.

1. It is now time to resume the story of the personal life of the Sovereign, which, amidst the multiplied transactions—social, colonial, and parliamentary—of this period, has been hitherto overlooked, but now came to exercise an important influence on public affairs. Ever since her accession to the throne, the youthful Queen had been the object of intense interest and affection to her subjects, and this increased in warmth as the period of her expected coronation approached. A graceful and accomplished horsewoman, the young Sovereign delighted in appearing before her admiring people, by whom she was always greeted with enthusiasm. No apprehensions of personal danger from the insane or disaffected for a moment deterred her from showing herself in this manner, though the event proved that such fears would have been too well founded. "Let my people see me," was her constant answer to those who suggested the possibility of such risk. This intrepid conduct met with its deserved reward; the Queen's popularity increased every day. The spectacle of a youthful and beautiful Queen appearing on horse-

back amidst her subjects, with no other guards but their loyalty and affection, was one which could not fail of speaking to the heart of a nation, in which the chivalrous feelings were still so strongly rooted as they were in the English people. One melancholy event, terminating in a mournful end, alone interrupted this cordial feeling; but its influence was of short duration; and even while it lasted—while the people lamented that their Sovereign should have been misled by erroneous information—yet they respected the motives by which she had been actuated, and saw in it only a proof of her earnest desire to uphold the purity of a Court to which her sway had lent so much lustre.

2. The coronation took place on the 28th June 1838, and though shorn of much of the quaint feudal splendour, which had now become antiquated, it was conducted on a scale of very great magnificence. So general was the interest excited by its approach, that it was calculated that, on the day when it took place, four hundred thousand strangers were added to the million and a half which

already formed the population of the metropolis. The great change introduced was the substitution of a procession through the streets for the wonted banquet in Westminster Hall—a change suited to the altered temper of the times, and abundantly justified by the result; for instead of a limited assembly of nobles, the whole inhabitants of London were admitted to witness the ceremony. “The earth,” says the contemporary analyst, “was alive with men, the habitations in the line of march cast forth their occupants to the balconies and the house-tops. The windows were lifted out of their frames, and the asylum of private life, that sanctuary which our countrymen guard with such traditional jealousy, was on this occasion made accessible to the gaze of the entire world. The morning was dark and lowering, but the clouds rolled away with the firing of the guns from the Tower; and before the procession set out, the sun was shining with uncommon brilliancy.” It moved from Buckingham Palace, up Constitution Hill, along Piccadilly, down St James’s Street, and thence along Pall Mall and Parliament Street to Westminster Abbey. The venerable pile was splendidly decorated in the interior for the occasion, and all the venerable usages, redolent of remote antiquity, religiously observed. The Queen’s personal appearance and animated countenance were the admiration of every beholder. Among the numerous foreigners of distinction present, none attracted so much notice as Marshal Soult, who was sent as special ambassador from France to do honour to her Majesty. Thunders of applause shook Guildhall, when, at a splendid entertainment given by the Corporation of London to the illustrious stranger, he stood up beside his ancient antagonist in arms, the Duke of Wellington, to return thanks when their healths were jointly drunk. The economical part of the nation was gratified by the lessened cost of the ceremony; for the entire expense was only £70,000, whereas that of George

IV. had cost £213,000. A general illumination closed the festivities, the lights of which were not extinguished when the rays of the sun on the following morning shone on the metropolis.

3. A still more important event in the history of the Queen, which has been attended with the happiest consequences, took place in the following year. Great anxiety had for some time prevailed in the country on the subject of her Majesty’s marriage, both on account of her own deserved popularity, and from a sense of the importance, in the troubled times which were evidently approaching, of a direct succession to the throne. As the Marriage Act confined her Majesty’s choice to foreign families, several young princes, attracted by the splendid prize, flocked to England, and shared in the magnificent hospitalities of Windsor. But for long the Queen’s choice seemed undecided. Several surmises, however, at length were heard of a preference shown for a young Prince of prepossessing figure and elegant manners; and universal satisfaction was diffused by the confirmation they received from her Majesty communicating to the Privy Council, assembled at Buckingham Palace on November 23, 1839, her intention of allying herself with PRINCE ALBERT OF SAXE-COBURG AND GOTHA. This announcement, which, by her Majesty’s gracious permission, was immediately made public, was speedily followed by the insertion, by royal command, of the Prince’s name with the rest of the royal family; and he was naturalised by a bill introduced into the House of Peers on 20th January 1840, which passed rapidly by a suspension of the standing orders. Ministers proposed £50,000 as the annuity to the Prince, which was, on the motion of the Duke of Wellington, somewhat ungraciously reduced to £30,000. Mr Hume moved to reduce it still further to £21,000, but this was negatived by a large majority in the Commons. The marriage took place on the 10th February 1840, with all the pomp and solemn-

nity usual on such occasions; and the public satisfaction was wound up to the highest pitch by the birth of the Princess-Royal, which took place on 21st November 1840.

4. Thus did the family of Saxe-Coburg ascend the throne of England—a memorable event in British annals, when it is recollected that, since the Conquest in 1066, only five changes of the reigning family had taken place—the Normans, the Plantagenets, the Tudors, the StUARTS, and the Hanoverians. The nation had good reason to congratulate itself that on this occasion the sceptre passed to a new family, not by the rude grasp of conquest, or amidst the agonies of civil war, but by the free choice of a young Princess, the undoubted Sovereign of the realm, who, in singleness of heart, bestowed her hand on the deserved object of her youthful predilection. Cousins-german by blood, the Queen and the Prince were nearly of the same age, and had been acquainted in their early years; but it was not till they met, in the bloom of youth, in the princely halls of Windsor, that their acquaintance assumed a more serious and tender form. The Prince possessed all the qualities fitted to attract the attention of his royal cousin. Gifted by nature with an elegant and commanding figure, he possessed at the same time a countenance in which an expression, naturally mild and benevolent, was mingled with a certain shade of reflection, and even melancholy. His character, after he was placed in the delicate and difficult situation of Prince-consort, but not regnant, corresponded with what might have been anticipated from this physiognomy. Carefully abstaining from any interference with party politics, or any intermingling, at least in a visible way, with affairs of state, he devoted abilities of the very high kind, a rare amount of information on nearly all subjects, solid judgment, and a disposition in the highest degree benevolent and philanthropic, to the encouragement of art and enterprise, and the alleviation in every possible way of human suffering. His influence with the Queen, whose

remarkable talents and patriotic spirit are fitted in a peculiar manner to appreciate these qualities, was always great, but it never appeared in a dangerous or invidious form; and the name of Prince Albert was, since his marriage with his royal consort, associated only with projects of patriotism and works of beneficence.

5. If Great Britain was fortunate in the personal character of the Prince whom Queen Victoria selected to be her royal consort, the nation was not less so in the principles of the family from which he was descended. The family of Saxe-Coburg had been amongst the first converts to, and steadiest supporters of, the Reformation. In the castle of Saxe-Coburg Luther sought and found refuge, when endangered in the first rise of the new faith; the apartments in which he dwelt, the bedstead on which he rested, the pulpit from which he preached, are preserved with pious care; and in the portfolio of the youthful Prince who was destined to place a dynasty on the throne of England, were to be found sketches of the venerable pile in which were preserved the relics which had given such distinction to his race. Immense, at this juncture, was the importance of this *confirmed Protestantism* in the royal consort of Queen Victoria. From the combined influence of the Reform Bill and the equal balance of parties in the House of Commons, it had come to pass that the small majority which cast the balance in favour of the present Administration was entirely composed of Irish Catholics, and by their defection it might at any moment be overturned. To counterbalance so formidable an influence in such a quarter, nothing could be so fortunate as the knowledge of confirmed Protestant principles in the family which now ascended the throne.

6. When Ministers could reckon only on so small a majority in the House of Commons, and were in a minority in the Lords, it was scarcely to be expected that any measures of real importance or beneficial tendency could be introduced into Parliament. Yet such was

the force of public opinion, that, despite the weakness of the executive, some important measures were during this period in a manner forced upon the Government by the country. The first of these was a bill for the relaxation of the ancient severity of our criminal law. Even after the unwearied and benevolent efforts of Sir Samuel Romilly and Sir James Mackintosh to remove this stain from our statute-book, much remained yet to be done; and public opinion, outstripping in this instance, as in many others, the march of legislation, loudly demanded the abrogation of the penalty of death in a much greater number of instances. Mr Ewart, and a considerable party both in and out of the House of Commons, went a step farther, and strenuously contended for the entire abolition of the punishment of death, even in cases of cold-blooded murder. To this extreme change, however, fortunately little countenance was given. The Criminal Law Commissioners, to whom the matter had been referred, recommended, in their report in 1837, the abolition of the penalty of death in twenty-one out of the thirty-one cases in which it was still retained. This proposal was adopted in a bill brought in by Lord John Russell, which passed the House of Commons against an amendment moved by Mr Ewart for the entire abolition of capital punishments by a majority of only *one*—so strongly rooted was the desire for an alleviation of the criminal law in the public mind. It passed the Lords without a division. This was a great and salutary change, and it was followed up by the Criminal Law Commissioners, who before 1845 had presented eight reports, which were consolidated in an Act intitled “An Act for the better regulation of Crimes and Punishments.” Since that time—that is, during a period now of fifteen years—the punishment of death has never been inflicted in Great Britain but in cases of cold-blooded and deliberate murder.

7. This has been a great and blessed change; and if it had been followed up by efficient measures to increase and

render more stringent the secondary punishments which were to come in place of death, it would have been a subject of unmixed thankfulness and congratulation. Unfortunately, however, this has by no means been the case; and from the entire neglect with which, for the next fifteen years, the subject of transportation has been treated, a new set of evils has arisen, which, if of a less tragic, has proved of a more widespread character than the sanguinary punishments of former times. The reason of this is obvious. The forced labour of convicts is a very great advantage to infant colonies, and is always at first gladly received by them; but after a time the necessity for their assistance is less strongly felt; and if care is not taken to *augment the numbers of free settlers in as great a proportion as that of the penal convicts*, they will come in time to be felt as a very great evil. This change was experienced in the strongest manner in the British penal colonies. From the lasting and widespread distress which, with the exception of three years, pervaded the British empire from 1838 to 1850, the multitude of convicts sentenced to transportation became so large that they greatly exceeded the requirements of the free settlers. New South Wales, being at once the most distant colony of Great Britain, and therefore the most expensive to reach by her emigrants, and the exclusive receptacle for its convicts, became ere long overcharged with the latter description of inhabitants.

8. Loud murmurs on the subject were in consequence heard in Sydney, upon which Government, to elude the difficulty, *sent them all to Van Diemen's Land*, a colony still farther away, to which no free emigrants could go for less than £25 a head, while to the American shores the transit cost only £5. As a natural consequence, Van Diemen's Land became choked up with convicts: from three to four thousand were in the end sent there every year, being more than the annual free emigrants. The evil consequence of this disproportion, which was soon generally known, diffused a

from which petitions for the entire abolition of transportation flowed in on all sides. To these demands Government, not properly understanding the subject, in an evil hour yielded; and the system of transportation, the best which human wisdom ever yet devised, both for the mother country, the colonies, and the criminals, has been, it is to be hoped only for a time, abandoned. The story of this disastrous change will form an important topic in the sequel of this History.

9. It was fortunate for Great Britain that at the time when this unfortunate change, the result of ignorance and inattention on the part of the central Government, was preparing in regard to transportation, more rational views came to pervade both the legislature and the country on the subject of colonisation generally. On 27th June 1839, resolutions on the subject were brought forward by Mr Ward,* which are of value as embodying, for the first time in the proceedings of the legislature, the true principles of colonial administration, which had been so often misunderstood or perverted by the selfishness or cupidity of those possessing influence or authority at home. They consisted in disposing of colonial lands, not to a few favoured individuals in huge lots, to whom they might prove a source of great and growing fortune, but in moderate quantities to

* "Resolved—I. That the occupation and cultivation of waste lands in the British colonies, by means of emigration, tends to improve the condition of all the industrious classes in the United Kingdom, by diminishing the competition for employment at home, in consequence of the removal of superabundant numbers, creating new markets, and increasing the demand for shipping and manufactures.

• "II. That the prosperity of colonies, and the progress of colonisation, mainly depend on the manner in which a right of private property in the waste lands of a colony may be acquired; and that amidst the great variety of methods of disposing of waste lands which have been pursued by the British Government, the most effectual, beyond all comparison, is the plan of a sale, at a fixed, uniform, and sufficient price, for ready money, without any other restriction or condition; and the employment of the whole, or a large fixed proportion, of the purchase-money, in affording a passage to the colony cost-free

such as might really undertake their cultivation, and at such reasonable prices as, without discouraging enterprise, might insure an attempt at least to produce reimbursement by their produce. The ruinous effects of the opposite system had been felt both in Canada and Northern Australia, where immense tracts of fertile land were retained in a state of nature from having been imprudently alienated to a few favoured individuals; and the beneficial effects of the system now recommended had been evinced in the new colony of Southern Australia in the most remarkable manner. The resolutions were withdrawn by Mr Ward, as it was too late to legislate on the subject in that session of Parliament; but Mr Labouchere, on the part of Government, announced their adoption of the principles embodied in the resolutions, which had already been applied in the new colony of Southern Australia; and they have formed the basis of colonial administration ever since that time. It is only to be regretted that, combined with these just views of colonies and emigration, there was not introduced a wise and extensive system of transportation, which might not only have relieved the mother country of that prodigious accumulation of incorrigible offenders which has since been felt as so serious an evil, but, by providing a steady supply of forced labour for the forma-

to young persons of both sexes of the labouring class, in an equal proportion of the sexes.

"III. That in order to derive the greatest possible public advantage from this method of colonising, it is essential that the permanence of the system should be secured by the Legislature, and that its administration should be intrusted to a distinct subordinate branch of the colonial department, authorised to sell colonial lands in this country, to anticipate the sales of lands by raising loans for emigration on the security of future land-sales, and generally to superintend the arrangements by which the comfort and wellbeing of the emigrants may be secured.

"IV. Resolved, that this method of colonising has been applied by the Legislature to the new colony of South Australia with very remarkable and gratifying results; and that it is expedient that Parliament should extend the South Australian system to all other colonies which are suited to its operations."—*Parl. Deb.*, xlviii. 697; *Ann. Reg.* 1839, p. 229.

tion of roads, bridges, and harbours in the colonies, have left individual free enterprise to devote itself to the cultivation of the separate properties, and thus rendered the increase of crime in the British Islands an additional source of prosperity and happiness to the whole empire.

10. Some very curious and important facts bearing on the great questions of emigration and colonisation were brought out in the course of this debate. It was stated by Mr Ward, that in the last forty-two years the American Government had realised by the sale of waste lands in the different States of the Union no less than £17,000,000 sterling, and yet these States, so far from having been retarded in their growth by so large a price being exacted for the purchase of lands, had made unprecedented progress in population, wealth, and industry. As a contrast to this, our own North American colonies, where vast tracts of land had been alienated to a few individuals incapable of improving them, remained comparatively waste and desolate, and not only made no progress, but brought in no revenue to lay the foundation of a better state of things. In the United States of America, no less than 140,000,000 acres belonging to the State had been surveyed and mapped, at an expense of above £500,000; and for the information of intended purchasers, a general land-office was established at Washington, and forty subordinate ones in different parts of the Union. The sum paid into the treasury since the system was introduced amounted to 84,000,000 dollars, by means of which the national debt had been paid off; and the annual sums flowing into the treasury from this source, which in 1795 had been only 4836 dollars, had risen progressively, till in 1836 they amounted to 24,000,000 dollars.

11. On the other hand, the adoption of the opposite system in most of the British colonies had been attended with the most disastrous results. In the case of the Swan River in Western Australia, no less than 500,000 acres were granted to Mr Peel, who took out

£50,000 to cultivate it; and the Governor got 100,000 acres: but these huge grants remained desolate, for the labourers taken out, not being attached to the soil by the bonds of property, all dispersed, and the colony went to ruin. In New South Wales, since the system of selling land had been introduced in 1832, though the price asked was the very inadequate one of 5s. an acre, no less than £240,091 had been realised in four years, which was a security for £1,000,000 of an emigration fund. In Canada, the system of large grants had been the most serious of all bars to improvement, and was the great cause of the acknowledged inferiority at that period (1839) of those provinces to the United States. In Upper Canada, out of 17,653,000 acres surveyed, only 1,597,000 remained unappropriated; in Lower Canada, only 1,669,963 out of 6,169,000; and in Nova Scotia, only 250,000 out of 6,000,000. In Prince Edward Island 1,400,000 acres had been alienated in one day, in blocks of from 20,000 to 150,000 acres each. Of all this immense territory the greater part remained waste and uncultivated; not one-tenth of the alienated land had been rendered profitable, while the opposite shores of America were teeming with towns, villages, and inhabitants. On the other hand, since the opposite system had been wisely adopted in 1831, by Lord Howick, in South Australia, the most gratifying results had taken place. No less than 124,738 acres had been alienated from 1831 to 1839, for a price of £124,499; and the inhabitants who already had gone out in five years were no less than 10,000 souls, at a cost of £18 a-head. Sir W. Molesworth at the same time mentioned the important fact, that the rapid progress of Australia was owing, not to the Government having provided the settlers with gratuitous lands, but "having furnished the combinable labour, which gave value to the soil by means of convict slaves transported at the cost of the country, while the Government had further created an excellent market, in the form of convict, civil, and military establishments, for the manufactures of the country. They

had granted away 7,000,000 acres, and transported in all 110,000 persons, of whom from 30,000 to 40,000 were now in private service."

12. These valuable observations indicate the principles on which the new colonial administration of Great Britain has been founded, which, beyond all doubt, are in themselves just, and for introducing which the Whig Government, and in particular Lord Howick (now Earl Grey), who first reduced it to practice in 1831, deserve the highest credit. These principles are: 1. To alienate the crown lands only in moderate quantities to individuals, and at such prices as render the purchase of large tracts impossible by any one person; 2. Out of the price obtained for these lands to form a fund for the gratuitous removal of emigrants to aid in their cultivation; 3. To give to the local legislature of the colonies such extensive powers as to render them, to all practical ends, self-governed. The latter object, which has now, though after a considerable lapse of time, been attained, by granting constitutions on the most liberal principles to all the colonies, was absolutely indispensable after the Reform Bill passed, and alone has held the colonial empire together since that momentous epoch. As the destruction of the nomination boroughs, by which the colonies had been formerly represented without the admission of any direct representation into the Imperial Legislature, exposed them without any shield to the rule of adverse interests in the heart of the empire, they must soon have broken off from British connection had they not been rendered practically self-governed, and thus retained in their allegiance by the firm and enduring bond of mutual interest.

13. The year 1839 is remarkable as being the first in which a body of emigrants landed from the British shores to establish a settlement in NEW ZEALAND. In October of that year the *Tory* sailed from the Clyde with some hundred emigrants on board, bound for that distant and then almost unknown land. It was understood, however, to be intersected by lofty moun-

tains, which gave promise of mineral riches, abounding in grassy vales, watered by pure and perennial streams, and blessed by a genial climate, equally removed from the snows of the arctic and the heats of the torrid zone. But it was known also to be inhabited by a race of savages who had acquired an unenviable celebrity all over the world as cannibals, and to whose real dangers imagination for long had added visionary terrors. It required no small courage in a small body of men to make more than half the circuit of the globe to settle in this distant and phantom-peopled realm; but the spirit of adventure indigenous in the Anglo-Saxon race, and which then existed in peculiar vigour in the British Islands, was equal to the undertaking; and the hardy emigrants, amidst the tears and prayers of their relations and friends, took their departure from the banks of the Clyde.

14. Amidst the whirl of party politics and the struggle for political power, this event excited little attention in London. But it was otherwise in the provinces, where its importance was more clearly appreciated; and at a public dinner given in Glasgow to the emigrants previous to their departure, a gentleman present thus addressed the assembly: "Let us no longer strain after the impracticable attempt to disarm the commercial jealousy of European states, but, boldly looking our situation in the face, direct our main efforts to the strengthening, consolidating, and increasing our colonial empire. There are to be found the bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh; there the true descendants of the Anglo-Saxon race; there the people who, already imbued with our tastes, our habits, our artificial wants, must be chained for centuries to agricultural or pastoral employments, and can only obtain from the mother country the immense amount of manufacturing produce which their wealth and numbers must require. There is no one circumstance in the present condition of Great Britain—not even those which are justly considered as pregnant with danger and alarm—that may not be

converted into a source of blessing, if a decided and manly course is taken by the nation and its Government in regard to its colonial interests. Indeed, so clearly does this appear, that one is almost tempted to believe that the manifold political and social evils of our present condition are the scourges intended by Providence to bring us back, by necessity and a sense of our own interests, to those great national duties from which we have so long and unaccountably swerved. Are we oppressed with a numerous and redundant population, and justly apprehensive that a mass of human beings, already consisting of twenty-five millions, and increasing at the rate of a thousand a-day, will ere long be unable to find employment within the narrow space of these islands? Let us turn to the colonies, and there we shall find boundless regions capable of maintaining ten times our present population in contentment and affluence, and which require only the surplus arms and mouths of the parent state to be converted into gigantic empires, which may, before a century has elapsed, overshadow the greatness even of European renown.

15. "Are we justly fearful that the increasing manufacturing skill and growing commercial jealousy of the Continental states may gradually shut us out from the European market, and that our millions of manufacturers may find their sources of foreign subsistence fail at a time when all home employments are filled up? Let us turn to the colonies, and there we shall see empires of gigantic strength rapidly rising to maturity, in which manufacturing establishments cannot for a very long period take root, and in which the taste for British manufactures, and the habits of British comfort are indelibly implanted in the British race. Are we overburdened with the weight and the multitude of our paupers, and trembling under the effect of the deep-rooted discontent produced in the attempt to withdraw public support from the starving but able-bodied labourers? Let us find the means of transporting these robust labourers to our colonial

settlements, and we shall confer as great a blessing upon them as we shall give relief to the parent state. Are we disquieted by the rapid progress of corruption in our great towns, and the enormous mass of female profligacy which now infests those great marts of pleasure and opulence? Let us look to the colonies, and there we shall find states in which the great evil experienced is the undue preponderance of the male sex; and all that is wanting to right the principle of increase is the transfer of part of the redundant female population which now encumbers the British Isles. Are the means to transport these numerous and indigent classes to those distant regions wanting? and has individual emigration hitherto been liable to the reproach that it removes the better class of citizens, who could do for themselves, and leaves the poorest a burden on the community? The British navy lies between; and means exist of transporting, at a trifling cost to the parent state, all that can be required of our working population from that part of the empire which they overburden, to that where they would prove a blessing.

16. "Powerful as these considerations are, drawn from private interest or public advantage, there are yet greater things than these; there are higher duties with which man is intrusted than those connected with kindred or country; and if their due discharge is to be ascertained by statistical details, it is those which measure the growth of moral and religious improvement rather than those which measure the increase of commerce and opulence. What said the Most High, in that auspicious moment when the eagle first sported in the returning sunbeam, when the dove brought back the olive branch to a guilty and expiring world, and the 'robe of beams was woven in the sky which first spoke peace to man'? 'God shall increase Japhet, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.' God has multiplied Japhet, and well and nobly has he performed his destiny. After conquering in the Roman legions the ancient world, after humanising

the barbarism of antiquity by the power of the Roman sway and the influence of the Roman law, the 'audax Japeti genus' has transmitted to modern times the far more glorious inheritance of European freedom. After having conquered in the British navy the empero of the seas, it has extended to the utmost verge of the earth the influence of humanised manners, and bequeathed to future ages the far more glorious inheritance of British colonisation. But mark the difference in the action of the descendants of Japhet—the European race—upon the fortunes of mankind, from the influence of that religion to which the Roman empire was only the mighty pioneer. The Roman legions conquered only by the sword; fire and bloodshed attended their steps. It was said by our own ancestors on the hills of Caledonia, that they gave peace only by establishing a solitude: 'Ubi solitudinem faciunt pacem appellant.'

17. "The British colonists now set out with the olive branch, not the sword, in their hands—with the cross, not the eagle, on their banners; they bring not war and devastation, but peace and civilisation, around their banners; and the track of their chariot-wheels is followed, not by the sighs of a captive, but the blessings of a liberated world. 'He shall dwell,' says the prophecy, 'in the tents of Shem.' Till these times that prophecy has not been accomplished. The descendants of Shem—the Arabic race—still held the fairest portions of the earth, and the march of civilisation, like the path of the sun, has hitherto been from east to west. From the plains of Shinar to the isles of Greece, from the isles of Greece to the hills of Rome, from the hills of Rome to the

shores of Britain, from the shores of Britain to the wilds of America, the march of civilisation has been steadily in one direction, and it has never reverted to the land of its birth. Is, then, this progress of civilisation destined to be perpetual? Is the tide of civilisation to roll only to the foot of the Rocky Mountains, and is the sun of knowledge to set at last in the waves of the Pacific? No, the mighty day of four thousand years is drawing to its close; the sun of humanity has performed its destined course; but long ere its setting beams are extinguished in the West, its ascending rays have glittered on the isles of the Eastern seas. We stand on the verge of the great revolution of Time; the descendants of Japhet are about to dwell in the tents of Shem; civilisation is returning to the land of its birth; and another day and another race are beginning to shed their influence upon the human species. Already the British arms in India have given herald of its approach, and spread into the heart of Asia the terrors of the English name and the justice of the English rule. And now we see the race of Japhet setting out to people the isles of the Eastern seas, and the seeds of another Europe and a second England sown in the regions of the sun." *

18. Less momentous in its ultimate consequences than this all-important subject of colonial emigration, but far more interesting at the time to the inhabitants of the dominant islands, the topic of POST-OFFICE REFORM at this period awakened a large portion of public attention. Mr Rowland Hill was the principal author of the great change, in this particular, which was

* The anticipations contained in the preceding observations, made by the Author in 1839, were by many at the time thought to be extravagant. But "truth is sometimes stranger than fiction;" and the following details, drawn from the census of 1861 of New Zealand, prove that, so far from being overstrained, they fall short of the truth:—

Years.	Population.	Cattle.	Horses.	Sheep.	Land cultivated.	Imports.	Exports.	Revenue.
					Acres.			
1851	20,708	34,787	2,890	233,043	29,140	£597,827	£303,282	£149,820
1858	59,328	137,204	14,992	1,523,324	141,007	1,141,273	458,028	341,665
1861	102,021	193,150	28,270	2,760,183	226,500	2,493,811	1,370,247	691,404

—Statistics of New Zealand for 1861 (from official documents).

ere long adopted by Government, and he found a zealous coadjutor in Parliament in Mr Wallace of Kelly, the member for Greenock. His plan consisted in at once reducing the postage of all letters—which at that period were variously charged, for inland distance, from 2d. to 1s. 2d.—to 1d. for every distance. The probable increase in the number of letters transmitted from this great reduction would, he contended, ere long compensate to the exchequer the consequences of the diminution of rates; and even if it should prove otherwise, the facilities given to mercantile communication, and the vast advantages of a great increase in friendly and domestic intercourse, were well worth purchasing at the cost of an inconsiderable loss of revenue. It was truly said, that if Government were to lay a tax of sixpence on every person *speaking* to their children, the injustice of the tax would be so universally felt that it would not stand twenty-four hours; yet what difference is there when parents are prohibited from writing to their children, or children to their parents, unless they pay that tax in the shape of postage? That the postage of letters is too high, is decisively proved by the fact that, between the years 1815 and 1835, the Post-office revenue, instead of increasing, had remained stationary; whereas, from the mere augmentation of population, it should have increased £507,500. There was much force in these considerations; and such was the enthusiasm which they excited among the mercantile classes, and the pressure they exerted upon the legislature, that, after much opposition, the scheme was at length adopted by Government, by a bill introduced into the Commons by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on July 5, 1839, which became law on 17th August thereafter. The majority for its adoption was not less than 102. A fourpenny rate was at first adopted for a few weeks; but the reduced rate of a penny for each half-ounce came into operation on the 10th January 1840.

19. Three-and-twenty years have

now elapsed since this great change was adopted, and experience has amply tested its results. In one point of view they have been satisfactory, in another the reverse. By a return presented to the House of Commons in 1849, it appeared that the number of letters had quadrupled since the introduction of the new system in 1840.* So far there is every reason for congratulation; for so great an increase in internal communication could not have taken place without a vast addition to human happiness, and no small strengthening of domestic love, the strongest safeguard of human virtue. But if the effects of this change upon the revenue are considered, and the ultimate results to the general taxation of the empire, a very different conclusion must be formed. The net revenue from the Post-office of the United Kingdom before the change was £1,649,000; and in 1850, after ten years' operation, it was only £733,000—it having sunk the year after the introduction of the change to £410,000, since which there has been a progressive advance. These figures appear in some degree to justify the expectations held out as to the increase in the number of letters posted coming at length to compensate the reduction in the rates of postage; but they prove to be altogether illusory, and to lead to a directly opposite conclusion, when a fact, carefully concealed at the time by the Liberal Government, but which has since been extracted from Lord John Russell, in a debate on the navy estimates, is taken into consideration. This is, that when the penny postage was introduced, the whole expense of the packet service, which formerly had been borne by the Post-office, amounting to £784,000 a-year, *was thrown upon the navy*. If this large sum were replaced as a

* LETTERS PASSING THROUGH THE POST-OFFICE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

1839,	81,460,516
1840,	168,768,244
1844,	242,091,685
1847,	322,146,241
1848,	328,829,185
1849,	337,065,167

—*Parl. Returns*, July 1850; and PORTER, 711.

charge on the Post-office, which it should be to make the comparison fair,* it would more than absorb the whole present surplus revenue derived from that establishment; so that, literally speaking, it is *now barely self-supporting*. The reason is, that the expense of the establishment, even without the packet service, has been so much increased by the change; before 1850 it had doubled, having risen from £670,000 to £1,320,000, while the gross receipts had declined from £2,500,000 to £2,165,000.* The fail-

ure of the scheme, in a financial point of view, appears still more clearly when it is recollected that the foreign and colonial postage, especially to America and the colonies, is still charged at heavy rates, though, to keep up the illusion, it forms part of the British penny-postage returns; and that a considerable addition has since the change been made to this branch of revenue, by making the Post-office the vehicle, which it was not before, for the cheap conveyance of books and parcels.†

* RETURNS AND CHARGES OF THE POST OFFICE FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM.

Year ending 5th Jan.	Gross Receipt	Expense of Management	Net Revenue.	Real Net Revenue, inclusive of Charges on Government Departments.
1839	£2,467,215	£669,756	£1,676,522	..
1840	2,522,494	741,676	1,649,088	..
New System.				
1841	1,359,466	858,677	500,789	£410,028
1842	1,499,418	938,168	561,249	447,993
1843	1,578,145	977,104	600,641	473,479
1844	1,620,367	980,650	640,217	523,714
1845	1,705,067	985,110	719,957	610,720
1846	1,887,576	1,125,594	761,982	660,791
1847	1,923,857	1,138,745	825,112	724,757
1848	2,181,016	1,166,520	984,496	863,206
1849	2,143,679	1,403,250	740,429	624,526
1850	2,165,349	1,324,562	840,787	733,863

—PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, p. 714, 3d edit.

† Subsequent experience has too clearly proved the truth of these remarks. In the year 1860, twenty years after the penny postage had been introduced, the real surplus was only £692,000, instead of £1,649,000, which it had been before the change was made.

Postage receipts—1860,	£3,524,710
Expenses besides packet service,	2,422,231

Apparent gain,	£1,102,479
Loss on foreign and colonial letters, including packets,	410,000

Total free proceeds of Post-office,	£692,479
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against £1,700,000, the clear gain when the penny system was introduced in 1840, when the business of the empire was not half of what it now is.—*Postmaster-General's Report*; *Times*, Nov. 21, 1861.

Accordingly, when the necessities of the Treasury and the vast expenditure on the navy in 1860 and 1862 rendered it advisable to restore the packet service as a charge on the Post-office, it at once appeared that the penny postage was scarcely self-supporting. The accounts for 1860 and 1861 stood thus:—

Years	Net Revenue.	Packet Service.	Clear Revenue.
1860	£1,436,121	£1,030,738	£405,383
1861	1,325,299	949,228	376,071

Thus the real clear revenue *nominally* drawn from the Post-office is under £400,000 a-year! But when it is recollected that the Post-office has now become a great carrier for books and parcels, that the foreign and colonial letters are still paid at the high rates, and that penny stamps have become an established currency for small payments, and that *all* its returns are classed as Post-office, it is evident the Penny Post-office is barely self-supporting.

20. The truth is, that the penny postage has broken down, so far as raising any surplus received from this source is concerned, from a very obvious reason, and which, in recent times, has occasioned the ruin of many other branches of revenue, and is one main cause of the disappearance of the sinking-fund, and constant financial embarrassment in which the country has since been involved. This is, that the reduction, however expedient and proper to a certain extent, was carried much too far. It is the greatest possible mistake to assert, as is so often done by the cheapening party, that you can never lower duties too much, and that the only secure foundation for a large revenue is an evanescent taxation. Under such a system it will very soon disappear altogether. Had a 3d. or 2d. postage for all letters been introduced, it would have been hailed as a great boon by the nation, and would soon have yielded a surplus revenue, in the first case, of £1,500,000, in the last of £800,000 a-year; whereas, under the penny system, it in reality hardly pays its own expenses, if the cost of the packet-service, which was formerly paid by the Post-office, is brought to its debit. The effects of this great mistake have been very serious, and are now, it is to be feared, irremediable. Coupled with the general failure of the revenue in other departments at this period from the monetary crisis, the great deficit of £1,500,000 a-year from the Post-office occasioned such a chasm in the exchequer that a great effort to replace it became indispensable; and recourse was necessarily had to what Sir R. Peel had shortly before justly called "the dire scourge of direct taxation." This rash and excessive change in the Post-office is thus to be regarded as the parent of the income-tax, now imposed as a lasting burden on a small portion of the nation; and a part of the general system, since so extensively carried out, of taking the weight of direct taxation entirely off the shoulders of the dominant multitude and laying it on a few

hundred thousands of the community.

21. Another matter seriously occupied the attention of the House of Commons and Parliament in this year, arising out of the perhaps imprudent exercise of that unknown and ill-defined power, the privilege of Parliament. The origin of the dispute was this: In the year 1836, Lord Chief-Justice Denman declared from the bench that the authority of the House of Commons could not justify the publication of a libel; while the House maintained that what was printed and published under the direction or by the authority of the House could not be questioned in any court of law, not even the highest. A committee of the House of Commons, to whom the matter was referred, reported to this effect on 30th May 1837, and the House resolved in the same terms, declaring any attempt to question this a violation of the privileges of Parliament.* Meanwhile Messrs Hansard, the parliamentary printers and publishers, had published in the parliamentary proceedings certain reports on prisons, in one of which a book, published by Messrs J. and J. Stockdale, found in a prison, was severely animadverted upon. Upon this Stockdale prosecuted the Hansards for libel, who in their turn pleaded the authority and privilege of Parliament.

* The resolutions of the House of Commons were as follows:—

"I. That the power of publishing such of its reports, proceedings, and votes as it shall deem necessary and conducive to the public interests is an essential incident to the constitutional freedom of Parliament, more especially of this House as the representative portion of it.

"II. That by the law and privileges of Parliament this House has the sole and exclusive jurisdiction to determine upon the existence and extent of its privileges, and that the institution or prosecution of any action, suit, or other proceedings, for the purpose of bringing them into discussion or decision before any court elsewhere than a Parliament, is a high breach of such privilege, and renders all parties concerned therein amenable to its just displeasure, and to the punishment consequent thereon."

—Resolutions of the House of Commons, May 30, 1837; *Parl. Deb.*, xlv. 981, and xlix. 1101.

Lord Denman overruled the defence.* The Hansards declined to plead to the court as incompetent, and the result was that judgment went by default, and the damages were assessed at £600 by the jury in the Sheriff Court. Stockdale pressed for instant execution; and the Sheriffs of London, Messrs William Evans and John Wheelton, having in vain petitioned for delay, were compelled to assess and levy the damages, which was done by an execution in the Hansards' premises, on 12th November.

22. The Sheriffs, anxious to gain time in the hope that some mode of escaping the dilemma in which they were placed might be discovered, delayed, after the execution, paying the money to the Messrs Stockdale. Upon this the Court of Queen's Bench granted a rule calling on the Sheriffs to show cause why they did not pay the money to the Messrs Stockdale; and at the same time the House of Commons ordered them to the bar of the House to answer for breach of privilege in not paying back the money to the Messrs Hansard. The Sheriffs then could not avoid either commitment by the Court of Queen's Bench for disobedience of its orders, or by the House of Commons for breach of privilege. They preferred, like intrepid men, doing the duty to which they were sworn as executors of the law; and having appeared in their scarlet robes of office at the bar of the House, and declined saying anything in defence of their performance of their duty as officers of the Court of Queen's Bench, they were, on the motion of Lord John Russell, committed for contempt of court. When taken, under a writ of Habeas Corpus, a few days after, to the Court of Queen's Bench, they were loudly cheered in the Court, the whole bar

* Lord Denman said, "I entirely disagree from the law laid down by the learned counsel for the defendants. My direction to you, subject to a question hereafter, is that the fact of the House of Commons having directed Messrs Hansard to publish all their parliamentary reports is no justification for them, or for any bookseller who publishes a parliamentary report containing a libel against any man."—*Ann. Reg.* 1840, p. 17.

standing; and while they remained in custody, they were visited by a large and not the least respectable portion of both Houses of Parliament. The sensation in the country was very great, and the press generally applauded the courageous conduct of the officers who asserted the supremacy of law against what was almost universally considered an unconstitutional stretch of the House of Commons. They remained in custody till April 15, when they were discharged, by order of the House, in consequence of a bill having become law adjusting this delicate and painful matter in futuro.*

23. In this distressing collision between the legislature and the highest court of law in the kingdom, it would appear that the House of Commons was right in the main point for which they contended, and wrong in the mode of attaining it which they adopted. As freedom of debate is indispensable to a legislative assembly, so the same immunity must be extended to all its reports and proceedings; and if the House itself enjoys that privilege, it is impossible to hold that their publication can be made the foundation of punishment or damages; for of what value in a free community is free discussion in the legislature, if its publication is prevented to the country? On this account, without questioning the decision of the Queen's Bench in point of law, it may well be doubted whether it had either justice, reason, or expedience for its support. In the object for which they contended, therefore, the House of Commons was clearly in the right, and it was an object essential to the utility and due discharge of its functions by a legislative and deliberative assembly. But, on the other hand, they seem to have been equally wrong in the mode in which they attempted to enforce it, especially against the Sheriffs. The Court of Queen's Bench having determined that the privilege of Parliament was

* Mr Sheriff Wheelton had been previously discharged on account of ill-health.—*Ann. Reg.* 1840, p. 46.

no defence against the publication of a libel, neither the plaintiff, in an action founded on such publication, nor the Sheriffs who carried the judgment for damages into execution, were the fit objects of the censure or punishment of the House of Commons.

24. In particular, to proceed against the Sheriffs, who merely did their duty as executors of the law they were sworn to obey, and for disobedience of which they were liable to commitment, was a stretch of power obviously contrary to justice, and which, it is to be hoped, will never be repeated. If any party was liable, it was Lord Denman and the judges of the Queen's Bench, who pronounced the judgment which the Sheriffs only executed as officers of the law. The remedy, without trenching on private right, was in their own hands, and consisted in yielding obedience to the decision of the law in the mean time, and passing an act which should render such invasion of the privilege of Parliament impossible in future. This accordingly was soon after done by an act brought in by Lord John Russell, which received the royal assent on 14th April 1840, whereby all actions founded on proceedings in Parliament printed by order of either House of Parliament, were prevented. This bill put the matter on its right footing, which, it is to be hoped, will never again be disturbed. And without imputing any improper or tyrannical motives to the majority in the House of Commons which supported Ministers in these proceedings, it may without hesitation be affirmed that their end was right, but their means were wrong, and that Mr Evans and Mr Wheelton, who, in such trying circumstances, asserted the supremacy of the law, deserve a place in the glorious pantheon of British patriots.

25. Ireland, during the years 1839 and 1840, remained in the same state, as to agrarian outrage, in which it had so long been, although, from the alliance which had now been contracted between the Romish leaders and the Government, it was no longer directed to political objects. The former began with an ominous event; for on the 1st

January 1839, Lord Norbury was mortally wounded by the ball of an assassin, within sight almost of his own home, and not more than a few hundred yards from the churchyard of Durrrow, where thirty or forty persons were attending a funeral, who, as usual, made no attempt either to arrest or pursue the criminal. The Earl lingered till the 3d in extreme agony, when he expired, leaving behind him the regrets of every one who knew him, for a more kind-hearted benevolent man, both in private life and as a landlord, never existed. This tragic incident produced, as well it might, a great sensation throughout the United Kingdom, and led to motions for production of papers relative to Irish crime, and animated debates in both Houses of Parliament on the subject, which threw great light on the social state of that ill-starred country.

26. From the facts elicited in these debates, it appeared that agrarian outrages had considerably increased in the course of the years 1836 and 1837.* In these two years no less than 519 rewards for detections of murders were published, but only nineteen were claimed. In 1836 the whole police of Ireland were put under the direction of the central office in Dublin; and the effects of this improved system appeared in a great increase in the number of convictions, both for serious crimes and minor offences; but the returns exhibited an awful picture of the extent to which violence and bloodshed had come to pervade the rural districts of the country.† In 1825, the

* AGRARIAN OUTRAGES.

First six months of 1836,	843
Last six months,	904
First six months of 1837, . .	1086

—*Ann. Reg.* 1839, p. 42.

† COMMITTEES FOR SERIOUS CRIMES IN IRELAND.

1825,	15,515	1833,	17,819
1826,	16,318	1834,	21,381
1827,	18,631	1835,	21,205
1828,	14,683	1836,	23,894
1829,	15,271	1837,	14,804
1830,	15,794	1838,	15,723
1831,	16,192	1839,	26,891
1832,	16,056	1840,	23,833

—*Porter's Progress of the Nation*, 668.

According to the returns of the Clerk of

committals for serious crimes, in all Ireland were 15,515; in 1839 they had risen to 26,392, though the inhabitants, during the same period, had not increased more than a fifth. The convictions for minor offences had increased in a similar proportion, and at the close of the period still more rapidly; in the last six months prior to December 1838, they were no less than 86,000 !* But the most melancholy fact was one brought forward by Mr Stanley, that in the year 1838, in eleven counties of Ireland, exclusive of Tipperary, there were 277 committals for murder, and only three convictions ! Among so many deplorable and startling facts, it was consolatory to find that there were some gleams of reviving prosperity, indicating what might be anticipated if a suitable system of government were permanently established in the country. The proportion of convictions to committals had steadily increased of late years, and came to be about 71 per cent of the whole—being nearly the same proportion as in England. And the price of land had risen in most counties from twenty to twenty-three, and even twenty-five

the Peace and Crown, the Police returns for the years 1837 and 1838 were 14,804 and 15,723 respectively, which was an obvious mistake, from the police, who in these years made the returns, then for the first time introduced, not understanding the English system. Lord Morpeth, in the debate on Irish crime in the House of Commons (*Parl. Deb.* xlvii. 322, 7th March 1839), quoted the Clerk of the Peace's returns as the true ones. The difference, which sorely perplexed the members of both Houses who spoke on the subject, is easily explained without supposing inaccuracy in either return, and is quite apparent to any one practically acquainted with the subject. It arises from the different class of cases included in the returns, whether they include any of the summary convictions or not. The Irish police, in 1837 and 1838, excluded many of the committals reported by the Clerks of the Peace from their returns, from regarding them as police cases, though reported by the Clerks of the Peace as grave offences tried at the assizes, which was erroneous, contrary to the practice in England and Scotland, and avoided in subsequent years.

* SUMMARY CONVICTIONS.

July to December 1837, . . .	74,336
January to June 1838, . . .	74,539
June to December 1838, . . .	86,615

—*Ann. Reg.* 1839, p. 42.

years' purchase—being nearly as high as in England or Scotland.

27. But though the rural districts were thus disturbed and stained with blood, the violence of the people was not directed against the Government, and this constituted an essential difference between the agitation at this time and what it had been on previous occasions. The *Precursor Association*, which had been set on foot by Mr O'Connell on the proclaiming down of the Catholic Association by the Lord-Lieutenant, had now, since the alliance of Lord Melbourne's Administration and the Roman Catholics, come to be entirely devoted to the support of Government, and was, in fact, their mainstay against the increasing hostility of the English county members. On March 6, 1839, Mr O'Connell said, at a meeting of the Precursor Association in Dublin: "What am I here for? To call upon all Ireland to rally round the Ministry; to call for my 2,000,000 of Precursors; to call on the inhabitants of all the counties, towns, boroughs, cities, and villages in Ireland, to meet at once, and second me in my undertaking. Do not speak of that Irishman that does not become a Precursor. Let Sunday week be the day, and on that day let every parish meet and adopt petitions on the subject. We want no packed juries, no dishonest judges; we want only equality: refuse us this, and then, in the day of your weakness, dare to go to war with the most insignificant of the powers in Europe." And at a meeting held in the Theatre-Royal, Dublin, on April 11, with the Duke of Leinster in the chair, and all the Whig nobility in attendance, he said, "The shout that this day emanates from the Theatre will be heard in St Stephen's, and it will cheer the heart of the Queen in St James's. Let her Majesty be menaced by the ferocious despots of the northern desert; let France, a country in which the king and the people seem affected with a periodical insanity, break her fetters again; but let her be governed as she has been by Normanby, and as she would be by Lord Fortescue, and if any hostile step dared

to tread upon the Queen's dominions, the foe to the throne shall either surrender, or be dashed into the sea."

28. The great circumstance which had rendered the government of Lord Normanby so popular with the populace in Ireland, was the wholesale liberation of criminals, which, in spite of all the complaints on the subject in the British Parliament, had continued throughout all his administration. The subject was brought under the notice of the House of Lords by Lord Brougham, in an eloquent speech, in which, amidst some of his habitual exaggeration, there was, it is to be feared, too much truth. He thus described the manner in which these jail-deliveries were conducted: "His Excellency came to a certain town, and was immediately attended by the populace to the jail. He entered the prison, a certain proportion of the prisoners were paraded before him, and those who were recommended by the jailer, often on the spot, were liberated without further inquiry. At Clonmel, lately, fifty-seven prisoners were drawn up in the yard, and received their pardon, while two hundred remained within the walls, who were not so exhibited; so that everything depended on the jailer, and the man who had been oftenest in jail would find most favour in his eyes. The wild bird would flap his wings against the cage, while that which had been hatched in slavery would never assail the wires with a feather of his pinions. Everywhere there was exhibited the same want of caution. In the summer of 1836, two hundred and forty prisoners were discharged by the Lord-Lieutenant by verbal orders, during a progress through part of Ireland. It is absolutely necessary to bring the matter before Parliament; for not only has it been sanctioned by a narrow majority of the House of Commons, but it has been approved by a letter written, the day after the last dissolution of Parliament, by Lord John Russell, then Home Secretary. If no step be taken, and that promptly, to express an opinion upon the true method in which the prerogative of the Crown is to be exercised in these high and

paramount duties, you will again see many an instance of that which Ireland has so lately exhibited—of mercy, now no longer a solemn duty, but transformed into an empty pageant; a pageant which exhibits justice and mercy in altered places—mercy blessed while justice weeps." Lord Brougham's resolution, condemning Lord Normanby's administration in this particular, was carried by a majority of 34—the numbers being 86 to 52.

29. It is humiliating to find that, in the midst of all these multiplied evils—social, economical, and administrative—under which Ireland laboured, the only remedy which the Government had to propose was the extension of the municipal franchise to every occupant of a subject worth five pounds a-year; and the only suggestion of the Conservatives, to raise it to ten pounds, at which it was finally fixed! Poor-laws to a certain extent had been already introduced—in 1837; but there was no attempt to establish railways or manufactures, to extend industry in any way in a country where the wages of labour were sixpence a-day, or to promote emigration in one where above two millions were in a state of pauperism! To bleed the plethoric patient was obviously the only remedy when he was labouring under apoplectic symptoms; but whenever anything of the kind was proposed in the House of Commons, the matter was adjourned till next session, or the House was counted out. The emigration during the years of intense suffering—from 1838 to 1842—was inconceivably small, when it is recollected what it has since become. In 1838 it was only 33,222 from the whole empire! Much of this unfortunate blindness is no doubt to be ascribed to the mistaken dogma of the political economists, then so generally received, that emigration was worse than useless, because it only made those who remained at home increase the faster. "Our present radical evil," said Lord Jeffrey, "is the excess of our productive powers, the want of demand for our manufactures and industry, or, in other words, the excess of our population. And for this,

I am afraid, there is no radical cure but *starving out the surplus*, horrible as it is. *Emigration can do comparatively nothing.*" It is a curious commentary on these opinions, which for a quarter of a century entirely governed the country, that in ten years immediately prior to 1856, no less than 2,080,000 emigrants left Ireland alone, and that in consequence the workhouses were deserted, and the wages of labour, for the first time in the memory of man, in the Emerald Isle, rose to a level with those in Great Britain.

30. But much also of the extraordinary blindness of all parties to the real cause of the misery of Ireland is to be ascribed to the circumstance of its having become, from an unforeseen consequence of the Reform Bill, the great battle-field for the parties which contended for the mastery in the country. Ministers having come to depend on a majority of 15 to 20 in the House of Commons, composed entirely of Irish Roman Catholic members, it became vital to the one party to secure their support—to the other to diminish their numbers. Hence the battle of parties was fought in Ireland; and the main thing attended to in any measures relating to that country was, not the good of its inhabitants, or the alleviation of its suffering, but the adoption of measures which might gratify the Romish priesthood, and secure or extend their influence in the elections. The project to take £100,000 a-year from the Protestant Church, and to give every starving peasant worth £5 a-year a municipal vote, had not the slightest tendency to remove the real causes of Irish distress, but a very great one to secure the support of the Roman Catholic priesthood and their nominees in the House of Commons. Thus Ireland was worse than neglected—it was misunderstood; and though its concerns were continually brought before the legislature, they were so in relation to projects which, by engendering a fierce party-strife, and occasioning a prolonged struggle between the two Houses of Parliament, rendered the nation every day more insensible to the only measures which could by

possibility administer to it any relief.

31. But pressing as the state of Ireland was, it and all other considerations yielded to a still more urgent matter, and that was the state of the FINANCES. Under the combined effect of five bad seasons in succession, and the contraction of the currency, which, under the existing system, was the inevitable result of the import of grain and export of gold which they occasioned, the revenue had declined to such a degree that all the efforts to effect retrenchment in every department made by the Government—and they were great and many—had been unable to prevent a great and growing deficit. The national income, which in 1836 had been £48,591,000, had sunk in 1840 to £47,567,000; while the national expenditure, in spite of every effort at economy, had increased from £48,093,196 in the former, to £49,169,000 in the latter. In this state of matters, the desperate plunge in quest of popularity made by the Government in adopting the penny postage brought matters to a crisis; for it at once cut £1,780,000 off the revenue—viz., £1,000,000 in direct and admitted loss of income from the Post-office, and £780,000 additional charge imposed on the navy after the change, for the packet service. The result was, in 1841, a deficit of above £2,100,000; a state of things, in a period of Continental peace, so disastrous, that it struck universal consternation into the country.* Sir R. Peel, who had the best access to correct reports of income, stated the amount of the deficits, when he came into office in the end of 1841, for the five preceding years, at the enormous sum of

* INCOME AND EXPENDITURE OF THE NATION FROM 1836 TO 1841.

Years.	Income.	Expenditure.
1836,	£48,591,180	£48,093,196
1837,	46,475,194	49,116,839
1838,	47,338,460	47,686,183
1839,	47,844,809	49,357,691
1840,	47,567,565	49,169,552
1841,	48,084,360	50,185,729

—PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, 8d edit., 475.

£7,500,000 sterling.* This state of things was the more alarming that it was evident that the limits of indirect taxation had been reached; for the Chancellor of the Exchequer had, in May 1840, imposed 5 per cent additional on customs and excise, and 10 per cent on assessed taxes, and the result had been in the highest degree illustrative of the real state of the country, and causes of the embarrassments of the Treasury. For the estimated increase on the customs and excise was £1,895,000; whereas the actual increase was only £206,000—being, instead of 5 per cent, but little more than one-half per cent; whereas the increase on the assessed taxes was £311,357, being $11\frac{1}{4}$ per cent—considerably more than had been expected. It was evident, therefore, that the limits of indirect taxation, for the time at least, had been reached, and that nothing remained, in Sir Robert Peel's words, but the "dire scourge of direct taxation." †

32. This state of things was the more alarming, that while the chief sources of revenue were thus visibly failing, or had reached their extreme

* Viz. :—

Years.	Deficiency in years ending January 5.	Ending April 5.
1838, . . .	£655,760	£1,428,534
1839, . . .	345,228	430,325
1840, . . .	1,512,792	1,457,223
1841, . . .	1,595,970	1,851,997
1842, . . .	2,101,369	2,334,559
	£6,209,119	£7,502,638
Certain deficit in 1843, . . .		* 2,570,000
		£10,072,638

—SIR R. PEEL'S *Statement*, March 8, 1842; *Parl. Deb.* DOUBLEDAY, ii. 343.

† Produce of Customs and Excise, 1839, was £37,911,506
Estimated produce of increase of 5 per cent, . . . 1,895,575

£39,807,081
Actual produce, . . . 38,118,221
Real increase, £206,715; being, not 5 per cent, but little more than $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

Assessed taxes, 1840, . . . £2,758,590
Produce of the same, 1841, . . . 3,069,947

£311,357

Being $11\frac{1}{4}$ per cent—not 10 per cent, as expected.

—*Ann. Reg.* 1840, 186; DOUBLEDAY, ii. 344.

limit, the public necessities, owing to the state of the national affairs in many parts of the world, loudly called for a great increase in the national armaments by sea and land. Affairs were so imminent in the Levant that a collision between the English and French fleets in that quarter might be hourly expected. Canada had recently before been in open rebellion; the West Indies were only hindered by weakness from following its example; a great and costly war, fraught with imminent danger, had been waged in Affghanistan; hostilities were going on on a great scale with the Chinese empire; and at home an insurrection from the Chartists had recently taken place, and was again threatened. On all sides the Government was assailed with applications for ships, men, and money; yet where to find them, with a growing deficit in the revenue, which had come now to exceed two millions a-year, and in a country where the limits of indirect taxation had evidently been reached, seemed an impossibility.

33. The country distinctly perceived their perilous circumstances, and they generally ascribed them to the imbecility and want of business habits in the Government, which was almost entirely composed of the Whig nobility. The opinion, in consequence, had become general in all ranks, excepting their own immediate dependants, that an entire change of government had become necessary to face the public necessities, that the administration of public affairs by a few Whig families was out of date, and that a large infusion of the commercial interests of the country into the Cabinet had become indispensable. The opinion, in particular, was all but universal, that they were especially deficient in knowledge of finances, and that to that the deplorable state of the Exchequer was to be ascribed. There can be no doubt that there was much injustice in these judgments. The Whig Ministry was by no means responsible for the disastrous state of the finances—at least, not in a greater degree than

their opponents had been. They had carried retrenchment and reduction of the national armaments by sea and land to the most extreme point, and increased neither till the public necessities rendered it absolutely indispensable. They had given in, it is true, to the desperate plunge of the penny postage; but in so doing the House of Commons had cordially supported them, and the magnitude of the general distress probably at that period rendered some alleviating measure indispensable. The true cause of the penury of the Exchequer, as of the suffering of the nation, was the establishment of a monetary system entirely dependent on the retention of gold, which, in seasons of scarcity, it was impossible to retain; but that, though by far the greatest mistake of the age, and the parent of boundless disasters, was not in a peculiar manner the fault of the Government, but was shared with them by the greater part of the House of Commons and a decided majority of the Conservative Opposition.

34. The alarming state of the country after the riots at Birmingham and Newport, and the incessant demands for additional troops to Canada, the West Indies, and India, from the important events of which they had become the theatre, led the Government to propose a slight increase of 5000 men to the military force of the country, by raising the strength of each regiment of infantry from 739 to 800 men. Small as this addition was, and evident as was the necessity under which it was proposed, it was strongly opposed by Mr Hume and the Radical party. The effect of this vote was to raise the military force of the country, including India, to 109,818, of whom 27,000 were charged on the revenues of the latter country, leaving 82,000 to be provided for by Great Britain. This force was, in 1840, increased to 121,112 men, of whom 28,213 were employed in India, and charged on its finances, leaving 92,899 for whose maintenance the country at home was to provide. Mr Hume strongly objected to this increase, and moved that

it should be reduced to 81,319 men; but the larger number was carried by a majority of 92, the numbers being 100 to 8.

35. Small as this force was for a country involved in a desperate conflict in India and China, and threatened with an immediate rupture with France, which had 300,000 disposable men under arms, the state of the navy at the same period was still more alarming. Lord Colchester brought this important subject under the notice of the House on 6th February 1840, and, referring to the Admiralty reports just published, he stated that our whole force on the home station consisted of three guard-ships, manned by a third of their complement, and therefore incapable of putting to sea; *one frigate of 36 guns, and some schooners.* There were two sail of the line at Lisbon, twelve in the Mediterranean, and one or two in other quarters of the globe—in all, only twenty. On the other hand, the official reports proved that the Russians had 28 sail of the line, 18 frigates, and 39 smaller vessels, carrying in all 3672 guns and 30,087 men, in the Baltic; and 13 sail of the line, 11 frigates, and 17 smaller vessels in the Black Sea, carrying 1956 guns and 14,300 men. France at the same period had 34,000 seamen in the royal service, being only 1000 less than the number in this country, and 40 sail of the line ready for sea, of which 20 were afloat and fully manned, besides 12 frigates, 20 steamers, and 90 smaller vessels. Thus France, which had no colonial dependency ~~except~~ Algiers, had as large a naval force as Great Britain, whose fleets were necessarily scattered over the globe, in defence of her immense colonial possessions. Lord Minto, the First Lord of the Admiralty, admitted, in his place in Parliament, “that we had *not ships enough in commission to cope with the whole Russian fleet*, if that fleet were also in commission, and prepared to take the seas against us; but it was not necessary that we should be in such a situation at this moment.” What rendered this state

of things peculiarly alarming was, that the naval establishment, in every one particular, was less at this time than it had been in 1792, when the population was not a half, nor its resources a fourth, of what they had since become, while our colonial dependencies, requiring defence in every quarter of the globe, had more than doubled since the former period; and so far from being at peace, we were engaged in a serious war with the greatest power in Asia, and on the verge of one with the greatest in Europe. It has been truly said, that on looking back to the extraordinary infatuation of these times, and the enormous perils with which it was attended, we feel as if reflecting on the movements of a somnambulist on the edge of a precipice, whom a single false step might at any moment have precipitated into the abyss.*

36. Serious as these considerations were, and pregnant, to the prophetic eye, with disaster in future times, they were, in those days of pacific occupation and severe distress, less generally interesting than such topics as promised, however remotely, relief to the universal suffering. Of these agitations, the cry for the abolition of the Corn Laws had now become the loudest and most threatening, both from the quarters in which it was heard and the privations in which it originated. It is very evident now to what cause the extreme vehemence of

the outcry on this subject had been owing. It arose from the extraordinary and heretofore unprecedented combination of extremely high prices of provisions of all sorts, in consequence of four bad seasons having succeeded each other without intermission, with ruinously low wages of labour, the sad result of the contraction of the currency and stoppage of credit, originating with a monetary system dependent on the retention of gold, and the drain of the precious metals occasioned by the necessary import of foreign grain. It may safely be affirmed that this extraordinary combination produced an amount of distress which never before had been witnessed in British, or even in modern history; and it was decisively proved by the extraordinary fact already mentioned, that *one-seventh* of the entire population of the two islands had become paupers. It fell with much more severity on the urban and manufacturing than the rural and agricultural population; for to the latter the high price of necessaries was in some degree compensated by the high price of agricultural produce, but to the former it was aggravated by the low price of manufactures. The people in towns saw this and writhed under its severity; but they were ignorant of the cause to which it was owing, and lent a willing ear to the agitators, who ascribed it all, not to the monetary sys-

* COMPARATIVE STATE OF THE NAVY, POPULATION, EXPORTS AND IMPORTS OF GREAT BRITAIN IN 1792 AND 1838 RESPECTIVELY.

I.—NAVY.							
Years.	Line in Commission.	Ordinary and Building	Frigates in Commission	Frigates Building.	Total Line.	Total Frigates.	Total.
1792	26	124	52	63	153	115	411
1838	21	70	0	84	91	98	363

II.—NATIONAL RESOURCES.				
Years.	Population of Great Britain and Ireland.	Exports. Official Value.	Imports. Official Value.	Shipping. Tons.
1792	12,680,000	£24,904,000	£19,659,358	1,540,145
1838	27,200,000	105,170,549.	61,268,320	2,785,387

—JAMES'S *Naval History*, II. 404; BARROW'S *Anson*, App. 424; PORTER'S *Parl. Tables for 1838*.

tem, but to the monopoly of grain, which was enriching the landlords and farmers in the midst of the general ruin. The suffering being universal among the working classes in the towns and manufacturing districts, and the remedy proposed for it in the free importation of foreign grain such as was on a level with every capacity, it obtained universal credit among these classes, and being skilfully improved by Cobden, Bright, and the whole orators of the Anti-Corn-Law League, became so powerful as to portend important changes in the commercial policy of the nation at no distant period.

37. Encouraged by these favourable appearances, Mr Villiers, on 7th February 1839, brought forward a motion to take evidence on the operation of the Corn Laws. But the attempt was premature; the landed influence of the great Whig magnates who formed the Cabinet was not sufficiently weakened to admit of such a concession to the commercial interests, and the motion was resisted by the Ministers. Such as it was, however, the result of the motion evinced the indecision of Government on the subject, and was hailed by the Anti-Corn-Law League as the harbinger of coming triumphs. Lord John Russell had declared to his constituents at Stroud that the Corn Laws were indefensible on principle, and that the time had come for a change; but in answer to Mr Villiers in the House, he said, "The impression on my mind is, that it is my duty to oppose the motion to hear evidence at the bar. I have not as yet found sufficient precedents to induce me to adopt such a course. At the same time, as there will be a great deal of discussion relating to facts, when a mode is proposed by which these facts can be ascertained which is conformable to precedent, and not inconvenient to the House, I shall be willing, though not ready to propose it myself, to support such an inquiry." The whole Cabinet, with the exception of Mr Poulett Thomson, but including Lord John Russell, Lord Palmerston, Lord Howick, and Mr Spring Rice,

voted against inquiry. The motion was negatived, 18th February 1839, by a majority of 189; the numbers being 361 to 172. So strongly intrenched were the Corn Laws in the Legislature on the very eve of their fall. In the House of Peers a similar motion was negatived without a division, Lord Melbourne declaring that "the repeal of the Corn Laws would be the *most insane proposition that ever entered into the human head.*"

38. The Anti-Corn-Law delegates were rather encouraged than the reverse by this result, and the general excitement on the subject was much increased by what had passed in Parliament, and the evident division in the Cabinet on the subject. "There was no cause for despondence; they were the representatives of three millions of people; they were the evidence that the great towns had banded themselves together; and their alliance would be a Hanseatic League against their feudal Corn-Law plunderers. The castles which crowned the rocks along the Rhine, the Danube, and the Elbe, had once been the stronghold of feudal oppression, but they had been dismantled by a league, and they now only adorned the landscape as picturesque memorials of the past, while the people below had lost all fear of plunder, and tilled their vineyards in peace."* The delegates left London, but only to meet again in Manchester, when fresh modes of agitation were devised, whereby it was to be carried into every village and hamlet of the realm. The "Anti-Corn-Law Rhymes" made their appearance at this period, and by expressing exactly the feeling of the urban multitude on the subject, soon acquired great popularity, and powerfully contributed to advance the cause. There was much ability in many of the publications issued, and thorough knowledge of the means of moving the multitude in the practical leaders by whom they were directed; but the great cause of the rapid progress and ultimate success of the movement, was, as already mentioned, the coincidence of high prices

* *Spectator*, 1839, 173.

of provisions, the result of five bad seasons in succession, with low prices of manufacturing produce, the result of the consequent contraction of the currency—a state of things so anomalous and distressing to the inhabitants of towns that it rendered them ready to embrace with ardour any project which held out the prospect even of bringing it to a termination.

39. It is the ordinary effect of such periods of general and long-continued distress, to engender a feeling of irritation at those in authority, which often leads to attempts at assassination. The great and affluent can in reality do nothing so well calculated to assuage the public distress, so far as their means go, as engaging in festivities which occasion an expenditure of money, for it is the want of such expenditure which occasions the worst part of the distress. It is grating to the feelings, however, to see one class revelling in luxury while another is pining in indigence, and reflection on the beneficial effects of the expenditure comes only to those who immediately experience its benefits. The Queen's popularity from this cause, and from no error on the part of her Majesty, sensibly declined in the melancholy years 1839 and 1840; and the irritable feeling in the last of these years appeared in attempts at assassination, which, though unconnected with any political association, and the acts of isolated individuals, were suggested by the general soreness and irritation which pervaded the public mind. The first of these was the act of a wrong-headed youth named Oxford, who, on 10th June 1840, fired two loaded pistols at the Queen as she was ascending Constitution Hill in the Park, in her phaeton. Happily neither shot took effect; the criminal was immediately seized; and by the mistaken lenity of the authorities, instead of being hanged, he was considered a lunatic, and sentenced to confinement in an asylum for life. He himself afterwards said, if he had been hanged there would have been no more firing at the Queen; but instead of meeting with his deserts, he became a hero with the fine ladies of

London, "even members of Parliament applying for locks of his hair." The consequence was, that several other half-crazy youths, desirous of notoriety, sought it by further attempts, or feigned attempts, to assassinate her Majesty, until the abominable practice was stopped by an Act passed in 1841, which declared any such attempts punishable, in addition to transportation, by *three private whippings in jail*. This was a disagreeable result of a longing for notoriety, and accordingly it put an effectual stop to these disgraceful acts. Yet how alarming so ever while they continued, they were attended with this good effect, that on every occasion on which they occurred they drew forth expressions of the loyalty of the people and the personal courage and humanity of the Sovereign.

40. The session of 1841, which was opened by the Queen in person on 26th January, took place amidst the general conviction that the Whig Ministry could not get through it. The balance of parties had been so even during the preceding session of Parliament, that it had been barren of legislative results. Nothing of real importance was either proposed or thought of, and Government seemed to cling to office rather from the instinctive desire of Britons not to be beaten, or a chivalrous feeling of devotion towards the Sovereign, than from any real sense that they had strength enough to discharge the duties of Government. The penny postage had given universal satisfaction, as every remission of taxation *generally felt* never fails to do; but it had made an alarming chasm of £1,800,000 a-year in the revenue, and brought up the deficit to £2,400,000, which Government apparently had not the means of replacing. Indirect taxes on articles of luxury consumed had been found by experience to have reached its limit; any increase had ceased to be productive. If attempted, it would at once raise such a storm among the urban consumers as would prove fatal to any administration. Direct taxation still remained, but it had been pronounced by Sir R. Peel to be a "dire scourge,"

and it was more than doubtful whether his whole party, three hundred strong, would not at once resist any attempt to introduce it. A universal feeling in consequence had come to pervade the community, that an entire change of Administration had become indispensable; the Tories openly exulted at the prospect of a speedy accession to power, and even their cautious leader did not hesitate to affirm on several occasions, that a united party, led by three hundred independent members of Parliament, could not long remain excluded from office.

41. Such was the weakness of Ministers that they were obliged to temporise with various measures which they had very recently denounced in the most unmeasured terms. Lord Melbourne had declared in Parliament that the project of repealing the Union was little better than high treason, and the idea of repealing the Corn Laws absolute insanity; but with both measures Ministers, to avoid ruin, were obliged to temporise. To conciliate O'Connell and the Irish Catholic members, they brought forward a bill for the registration of voters in Ireland, the purport of which was, under the name of a mere regulation, to introduce a new Reform Bill, greatly extending the constituency, by making a rating at *five pounds* to the poor-rate confer the parliamentary suffrage. This was in effect a new Reform Bill *reducing the suffrage one-half*, and as such it threatened the most dangerous consequences, especially in a country agitated by the cry for repeal of the Union. Accordingly it was resisted by Sir R. Peel with the whole strength of the Conservative party. The result was, that it was carried in the Commons only by a majority of *five*, the numbers being 299 to 294. This small majority was justly considered as fatal to the bill; and the final fate of the measure proved that it was scarcely less so to the Administration. In committee, Ministers were obliged to agree to an amendment proposed by Lord Howick which raised the qualification to £8, "a change which," Sir R. Peel observed, "disentitled them to the con-

fidence of the House or the country." In effect, Ministers lost credit essentially by the conduct pursued in regard to this bill with both parties—with the one side of the House by bringing it in, with the other for substantially abandoning it when introduced.

42. It was now evident to all the world that the Whig Ministry were doomed, and that it was only a question of time when their tenure of office should come to an end. As a last resource, Lord John Russell gave notice that on the 31st May he would move for a committee of the whole House to consider the Acts of Parliament relating to the importation of grain—the very thing which, in the preceding session, he had opposed, and which Lord Melbourne had declared to be the greatest insanity which could enter into the human head. The discussion of this motion, however, and the development of the grounds on which it was now to be supported by Government, was prevented by the turn which Parliament took before the day originally fixed for its discussion came on. The state of the finances had become so pressing, from the serious chasm occasioned by the penny postage and the decline of several branches of the revenue from the general distress, that it was indispensable, at all hazards, to make an attempt to fill it up. Yet was this no easy matter; for how ready soever all parties might be to repeal taxes, it was more than doubtful whether any of them would consent to lay them on again. At the same time, any increase to the direct taxes was sure to be to the last degree unpopular, and resisted with the utmost obstinacy, especially by the Conservative party. Pressed by so many difficulties, the Government endeavoured to steer a middle course, which, as usual in such cases, displeased all parties and conciliated none. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in opening the budget, admitted that the deficit for the ensuing year would amount to £2,421,000; and this deficit he proposed to make up by reverting to the principles of the former Whig budget which had been so unceremoniously disposed of in 1831. His proposal was

to *raise* the duty on colonial timber from 10s. to 20s. a load, and *reduce* that on Baltic timber from 55s. a load to 50s.; and to leave the duty on colonial sugar at its present amount of 24s. a cwt., but to *lower* the duty on foreign sugar from 63s. to 36s. From these sources, owing to the increased consumption, he calculated on an increase of revenue to the extent of £1,300,000. The balance of the deficiency was to be made up by a *fixed duty of 8s. a quarter on foreign wheat*; rye, 5s.; barley, 4s. 6d.; and oats, 3s. 6d.—while the deficiency of £1,800,000 in the last year was to be provided for by the issue of exchequer bills to the extent of £800,000, and appropriating, on the responsibility of Government, £750,000 invested in the public securities in the name of the trustees of savings banks.

43. It may well be conceived what a sensation the announcement of this budget, so eminently favourable to foreign and injurious to domestic industry, produced in the House and the country. The interests thus threatened were too strong, and had too long been protected by the Legislature, to yield without a violent struggle. It began, accordingly, the moment the budget was announced, and soon convulsed the country from end to end. The West India merchants and proprietors met in London, Liverpool, and Glasgow; the Canadian timber merchants, in Bristol and Liverpool; the landed interest, in their several county towns. Universally the budget was condemned in the most unmeasured terms; and such was the clamour raised that before the vote was taken it was evident that Ministers would be in a minority. Yet was the result even more decisive than had been anticipated; for on a division (May 10) on the proposed reduction of the duties on sugar, which was first taken after the debate had lasted eight nights, they were left in a minority of 36, the numbers being 317 to 281.

44. The arguments on this all-important question, being the same as those of which a summary will be given in the great debate on Free Trade in a subsequent chapter, need not be here recapitulated. But some observations

which fell from the Conservative leaders, who both then and afterwards took so important a part in that question, deserve to be recorded. Sir R. Peel said: "Even though no questions of timber or corn had been mixed with that of sugar, I would have voted against the introduction of slave-grown sugar into the English market, not upon the abstract ground that conscience would forbid all commerce in the produce of slave labour, but upon a consideration of the social and moral condition of the West India people under the experiment now in progress. If the personal interests of the planters alone were taken into consideration, the House might possibly expect them to sacrifice those interests to the public advantage. But much higher interests are at stake in the moral and social condition of the people in that part of the empire where we have recently made the most hazardous, and, I rejoice to admit, the most successful experiment in the annals of the world. But it is impossible to foretell what may be the consequences of that step, if we take the new step of introducing sugar made by slave labour into the market of this country. A sufficient quantity of sugar for home consumption may be obtained from the East and West Indies and the Mauritius, without resorting to the slave colonies. New articles of remittance should be encouraged from India, for its inhabitants have suffered severely from the unrestricted admission of English manufactures. . . . After such fearful examples, I am unable to perceive the paramount obligations of those *free trade doctrines* which now demand a preference to the slave labour of Cuba and Brazil over the free industry of the East Indies. The great experiment of the extinction of slavery should be fully and fairly tried; but this can never be done unless we give the free labour of our own colonies the *exclusive preference over the slave establishments of other states*."

45. "The principle of Free Trade announced on the other side is, that, without reference to any other considerations, we should go to the

cheapest market. If that is to be acted upon as a universal rule, without reference to time and circumstances, I can only say *I cannot concur in it*. Without contesting the principle in reference to countries—if it were possible to conceive such—in which no previous relations existed, in a country of such complicated relations as this, of such extensive empire and immense trade, the rigid application of such a principle would *involve us in inextricable confusion*. Consistently with this principle, we should go to the cheapest market for corn and timber, and every other commodity. How is this reconcilable with the duty of 8s. a quarter, still proposed to be levied on imported wheat, and 20s. a load on imported foreign timber? The propriety of the change on the timber duties cannot be judged of till the details are furnished from Canada. The principles I now maintain are those of Mr Huskisson, and on which I and my colleagues, when in office, have always proceeded.*

46. "Notwithstanding the forcible combination which has been formed against the Corn Laws—notwithstanding the declarations, that either the total repeal or the substitution of a fixed duty for the present scale is the inevitable result of the agitation which is now going forward—I do not hesitate to adhere to the opinion which I expressed last year, and now again declare, that my preference is decidedly in favour of a graduated scale to any fixed duty. I prefer the principle of a graduated sliding duty to a fixed one. I do not pledge myself to any rigid details; I reserve to myself the opportunity of consider-

* Mr Huskisson said in 1828: "An honourable gentleman had spoken in favour of a fixed duty on grain: abstractly that might look well in theory; but when we regard the circumstances of the country and the wants of the people, we must see the impossibility

ing them. I bind myself to the principle of a graduated scale in preference to a fixed one, but not to any details. The noble lord will propose the adoption of a fixed duty: I will offer my opposition to it on the ground that it cannot be permanent; it must be abandoned under the pressure of general distress in seasons of scarcity.

47. "Government talk of a great commercial crisis; they are themselves mainly responsible for it. They have come down to the House year after year complaining of a deficiency, and now they boast themselves the martyrs of Free Trade, and apply to me for a budget. I am by no means surprised at the confidence of your opponents to do what you have shown you yourselves cannot do. During the period when the Administration of which I formed a part had held office, they had reduced the public debt by £20,000,000, and the annual charge upon that debt by above £1,000,000, and yet they left a clear surplus of income above expenditure of £1,600,000 when they went out of office in 1830. What has come of that surplus now? It has turned, on your own showing, into a deficit of £2,400,000. And this has happened when we were impeded by all the difficulties of an unreformed Parliament, and you have had all the advantages of a reformed one—when you have had your own way for eleven years, during which you have enjoyed all the advantages of cheap government. This evil has occurred, not from any particular cause, but from general mismanagement—from the circumstance of Ministers clinging to office when they no longer enjoyed the confidence of this House or the country, and were unable to carry through the measures which they deem essential to the public good of the country. It is not for the interest of representative government and constitutional monarchy that such a system should continue; Ministers, in so retaining power, are violating the first principles of the constitution which they gave me credit for yielding to in 1835. Even measures in

scarcity
expos-
"sufferings, the infliction of which no claim to protection on the part of the corn-growers would ever justify. I said in 1815, and I say again, that *nothing can be more dangerous than a reliance of this country on foreign nations for food*."—*Parl. Deb.*, xlviii. 685.

themselves beneficial lose their good effects by being brought forward by a party holding office under such circumstances. They are looked upon, not as springing from the deliberate will of its leaders—not in consequence of the settled convictions of their minds,—but merely for the purpose of propping up a falling cause, and conciliating the good-will of a particular party to whose support it looks. I will not be tempted to fall into the snare laid for me; I will not offer my budget in competition with yours; my vote this evening is *upon a question of confidence.*”

48. To these powerful and sarcastic observations it was replied by Lord Palmerston: “The question which is this night before the House, which should be answered openly and explicitly, is, When a deficiency exists, do you approve of making it up in the way which we intend, or do you propose to lay on new taxes? The right honourable baronet has not done this; he has objected to our proposed duties on sugar, timber, and corn, but he has not told us what he would substitute in their room. And yet that some additional imposts must be laid on is self-evident; and where shall we find any to which objections equally plausible may not be stated? The question to be decided to-night is not a question of confidence; it is the adoption or rejection of a great principle; that principle is Free Trade, the opposite principle is Monopoly. The Opposition have shrunk from grappling with this great issue, and endeavoured, instead, to narrow the discussion to one collateral point, and to mislead the House and the country by pretending an unbounded zeal for the negroes. I distrust the sincerity of this newborn anxiety on the part of those who have so long been a party to the sufferings of these very negroes. We decline to take slave-grown sugar ourselves on pretence of humanity, but we do not hesitate to assist the slave-owners by transporting their produce to other countries, or refining it. Is not the pretence of conscience, under these circumstances,

a gross hypocrisy? The true, the only way to exterminate the slave-trade is, to increase the vigilance and activity of our own cruisers, and the stringency of our treaties with foreign governments, to effect its abolition. Were we to assert, as the Opposition now do, that free labour cannot compete with slave labour, we should be supplying the advocates of slavery with the best of all arguments against their complying with our demand for the abolition of the slave-trade, and falsifying all that we had said as to the advantages of freedom.

49. “The proposed budget retains duties on foreign produce solely for the purposes of revenue. We do not wish to see the principles of Free Trade suddenly and universally applied, to the derangement of established interests, and the ruin of great numbers of individuals; we desire only to go on as quickly as circumstances will admit. All must admit that it is for the interest of Great Britain to extend our foreign exports; but how is this to be done if, by prohibitory duties, we virtually exclude theirs in return? It will not do to urge a more liberal commercial policy on foreign nations, telling them that competition is the light and life of trade, while we keep up our own restrictive system at home. It is our doing so which has so long deterred other nations from adopting a more liberal commercial policy. This is, in particular, the case with Germany, France, Belgium, Sweden, Russia, Mexico, and the United States. Foreign countries listen with polite incredulity to our representations, and point from our theories, pressed upon them, to our practice embraced by ourselves. It is difficult to see what reply can be made, under our present restrictive system, to such answers.

50. “Protection, in the sense in which it is now used by those who oppose the plan of Government, is a tax levied upon the industry and skill of the mass of the community, to enable a few to remain indolent and unskilful. Such protection is not only erroneous in principle, but utterly use-

less to those for whose particular benefit it is maintained. Show me a trade that is free, by which I mean open to fair competition, and I will show you a trade carried on with intelligence, enterprise, and success. Show me a trade that is highly protected, and I will show you a set of men, supine, unimproving, and probably labouring under perpetual embarrassment. But the evil does not stop here. Not only does this excessive protection paralyse the very interests it is intended to invigorate, but it operates most injuriously upon the country in relation to our commercial intercourse with foreign nations. For protection is a game which two can play at. It is impossible that a great country like England should go on protecting, as it is called, its various interests, and that other nations should not follow our example. They have all accordingly done or are doing so. The Commercial Union of Northern Germany, which is in reality a protective union, has just renewed itself by treaty from 1842. Russia and Sweden are doing the same. France, which ought to be the great market for our commodities, being so populous and so near us, has a tariff which excludes the greater portion of our manufactures. The United States and Mexico have the same. When we preach to these foreign nations the absurdity of such practices, they reply: It is all very well; but we observe that England has grown wealthy and great by these means, and it is only now, when other nations are following her example, that she has discovered that this system is an absurd one: when we shall have attained the same pitch of commercial prosperity which England has reached, it will then be time enough to abandon a system which perhaps then may no longer be necessary. It is in vain to tell them that England has grown great and prosperous, not in consequence of the protective system, but in spite of it. Till we prove by our practice that we are serious in our doctrines, neither France nor Belgium, nor any other country, will relax their prohibitory laws.

51. "Symptoms of the most dangerous kind are already visible in our trade, the consequences of the protective system, which may well arrest the attention of the nation. Every year a smaller portion of those manufactures consists of articles in the making of which much labour and skill are employed. Every year a greater proportion of our exports consists of articles of an *elementary nature*, which are not destined for inward consumption, but are to serve as materials to the foreign manufacturers. For instance, the exportation of cotton goods does not increase in the same proportion as the exportation of cotton yarn. Our artisans and capitalists are leaving the country. Every year the protective system is rising up against us, raising in other parts of the world manufacturing competitors, and every year British skill and capital are transferring themselves abroad, to render the competition of foreign countries more and more formidable. We are thus ourselves assisting to exclude our own commerce from the markets of other countries. If this system is persevered in, we shall at last come to that spendthrift industry which is to consist in exporting machinery as well as the elements of manufactures; and when our exports consist of capital, skill, machinery, and materials, we shall no doubt see how it happens that we are no longer able to compete with other nations in the markets of the world.

52. "These, then, are the principles on which we stand; our plan is simple, plain, and intelligible. The whole history of parliamentary legislation for a number of years past has been nothing but the destruction of monopolies. The Test and Corporation Acts, the Protestant monopoly in Parliament, the boroughmongers' monopoly, have successively fallen. The monopolies of corporators, and that of the East India Company, have also gone down. We are now pursuing monopoly into its last stronghold—we are assailing the monopoly of trade. Our opponents have not spoken out equally ex-

PLICITLY: they have not told us what they propose to do; but I will venture to say that before these discussions are brought to a close they will be obliged to speak out. It is due to themselves, to us, and to the country, that their opinions on these important matters should no longer be shrouded in mysterious silence, or concealed by evasive declarations. We have a right to call upon them, not to give us a new budget—for that we do not want, and would not accept if offered us—but to tell us, ay or no, whether they will adopt the principles on which we have founded our budget, and of which the country has unequivocally expressed its approbation. But I will venture to predict, that although they may resist those measures to-night for the sake of obtaining a majority in the division, yet if they should come into office, these are the measures which a just regard for the finances and commerce of the country *will compel them themselves to propose to carry.*"

53. Memorable in many respects as the harbinger of the fall of the great party which for eleven years, with the intermission of a few months, had governed the country, this debate is still more remarkable as the first unqualified declaration of the principles of Free Trade; and never, certainly, were they more ably and manfully stated than by Lord Palmerston on this occasion. Equally remarkable was the prophecy, so soon destined to be fulfilled, that if Sir R. Peel and his party themselves came into power, they would be compelled themselves to embrace and adopt these principles. Nor is the debate less worthy of attention as exhibiting the rhetorical skill of these two great masters of the art of oratory. On the one hand, Sir R. Peel, carefully avoiding committing himself to any general principles, excepting the maintenance of the sliding scale and the protective duties on sugar, was seeking to run the debate into a censure of the plans proposed by Ministers, and sarcastic remarks on the deficit in which they had landed the nation. On the other hand, Lord Palmerston carefully eschewed these unfavourable topics,

and intrenched himself in the principles of Free Trade, which his practised eye already told him would ere long obtain the ascendancy in the country.

54. Every one saw that the decisive majority of 36 against Ministers on this vital question had numbered the days of the Government, and it was generally expected that they would announce their resignations next evening in Parliament. Contrary to expectation, however, this was not done; on the contrary, Lord John Russell contented himself with announcing that on the Monday following he should move the annual sugar duties, and on the 4th June bring forward the question of the Corn Laws. It was now evident that Government meant to evade the question of the budget, and, anticipating a defeat on the corn duties, would dissolve with a view to raising the cry of cheap bread. The skilful leader of the Opposition took his measures accordingly. When the question of the sugar-tax came on, he seconded the Chancellor of the Exchequer's motion that the existing duties should be continued for a year, and gave notice of a motion of want of confidence in Ministers, to come on on the 31st May.* It came on accordingly, and, after a debate of four nights, was carried against Ministers by a majority of ONE. It is remarkable how many decisive votes, both in France and England, have been carried by the same slender majority. The vote which ushered in the French Revolution in 1789, that which introduced the Reform Bill in England in 1831, and that which finally displaced the Whig Ministry, were all carried by a majority of one.

55. Upon this Ministers very properly agreed to evade all further discussion on the Corn Laws, to take a vote of supply for a few months, and

* "That Her Majesty's Ministers do not sufficiently possess the confidence of the House of Commons to enable them to carry through the home measures which they deem of essential importance to the public welfare, and that their continuance in office under such circumstances is at variance with the spirit of the constitution."—*Parl. Deb.* lviii. 1241.

then to appeal at once to the nation, which was finally to determine between them and their antagonists. This proposal was immediately agreed to by the Opposition. The remaining business of the session, which was chiefly of a formal nature, was rapidly hurried over, all measures of importance being dropped on both sides. The House quickly emptied, every one hurrying to the country to canvass his constituents; and on the 23d June, Parliament was prorogued by the Queen in person. On the 29th of the same month it was dissolved by royal proclamation, and writs for a new Parliament issued, returnable on the 19th August.

56. Immense was the excitement which followed in the country upon this appeal from the Sovereign to the people. Every one saw that the fate of the Ministry would depend upon the result of the contest, and this, more than the measures to be pursued by Government, or any abstract questions of commercial or social policy, was the issue upon which the rival parties went to the nation. It is true, the Conservatives, or "Protectionists," as they now began to be called, loudly declaimed, on the hustings and in the press, on the injury to native industry, both at home and in the colonies, which would ensue from the proposed reduction in the duties on foreign corn, sugar, and timber, and opposed to the cry of "cheap bread," which was loudly sounded on the other side, the cry of "low wages," held out as the inevitable consequence of any considerable reduction in the price of corn. Free Trade was the staple of the Whigs on this occasion; they stigmatised their opponents everywhere as monopolists; and whatever may be the real merits of that question, or its ultimate effects, to them belongs the credit of having first and most manfully asserted it. But though they wisely, and with just foresight, endeavoured to run the contest into one of Free Trade or Protection, the people could not be brought to regard it generally in that light. They persisted in regarding it as a question of

men, not measures; not whether the Liberal movement was or was not to be carried on, but whether Sir R. Peel or Lord Melbourne were to direct it. The majority of the nation were against them on that question. They were alarmed at the distress which had so long pervaded the country, and the serious deficit which had of late years appeared in the finances; they doubted the ability of the Whig Ministry to fill it up, from a conviction that they were not men of business habits or acquirements; and they distrusted the sincerity of the recent declarations of the Cabinet in favour of Free Trade, when the Premier had so lately pronounced the repeal of the Corn Laws the most insane project that ever entered the human head, and Lord John Russell had declared it to be absurd, mischievous, and impracticable. These were the views which divided and broke down the Liberal majority in the boroughs. In the counties the case was different. The contest was more taken up as one between low and high prices, paid and unpaid rents; and the agricultural interest stood shoulder to shoulder in a contest in which they considered their means of existence and that of their families was at stake.

57. The elections began as soon as the writs reached the several returning-officers; and the result soon showed how great a change the four last disastrous years had wrought in the public mind, especially in the larger boroughs and manufacturing districts. London, as usual, was the first in which elections took place; and the issue of the contest was ominous of the general return, and of the fate of the Administration. Four Conservative candidates there appeared to contest the representation with the four Liberals, including Lord John Russell, who had held it ever since the Reform Bill passed; and the result was that two of them were returned, a Conservative (Mr Masterman) being at the head of the poll, and Lord John at its foot. In the counties, a large majority generally appeared for the Conservatives: in the English counties the

majority was so great, that, excepting in a few places where the hereditary influence of a few old Whig families was not to be overcome, it may be said to have been overwhelming. Even Lord Morpeth was defeated in the West Riding of Yorkshire by a majority of 1100, by an opponent whom at the last election he had worsted by a similar majority, although he made a speech on his overthrow so eloquent and full of generous feeling, that every one who heard it declared he never would be in a minority again.* Lord Howick was worsted in Northumberland, Mr O'Connell in Dublin, for which city two Conservatives were returned. Even in Westminster, the stronghold of the Liberal party in the metropolis, Sir De Lacy Evans, a staunch Radical, was compelled to yield to Captain Rous, a decided Tory. The result of the contest was more favourable to the Conservatives than their most sanguine supporters had anticipated,† for it

* NUMBERS AT ELECTIONS OF 1837 AND 1841 FOR THE WEST RIDING.

Election 1837.		Election 1841.	
Lord Morpeth, . . .	12,576	Hon. S. Wortley, . . .	13,165
Sir G. Strickland, . . .	11,892	Mr Dennison, . . .	12,780
Hon. S. Wortley, . . .	11,489	Lord Morpeth, . . .	12,080
		Lord Milton, . . .	12,031

This change was the more remarkable, that the West Riding was one of the greatest manufacturing districts in England.—*Ann. Reg.* 1841, p. 146.

† The Returns were as follows:—

DIVIDED INTO COUNTRIES.				
	Liberals	Conservatives.	Liberal Majority.	Conservative Majority
England and Wales, . . .	199	303	..	104
Scotland,	31	22	9	..
Ireland,	62	43	19	..
	292	368	28	104
DIVIDED INTO CITIES AND COUNTIES.				
	Liberals.	Conservatives.	Liberal Majority.	Conservative Majority
English Counties,	23	136	..	113
„ Universities, . . . .	..	4	..	4
„ Cities and Boroughs, . .	176	163	13	..
Scotch Counties,	10	20	..	10
„ Burghs,	21	2	19	..
Irish Counties,	39	25	14	..
„ University, . . . . .	..	2	..	2
„ Boroughs,	23	16	7	..
	291	368	53	129
PROFIT AND LOSS FROM THE FORMER RETURN.				
	Conservative Gain.		Liberal Gain	
English Cities and Boroughs, . . .	38		81	
„ Counties,	23		1	
Scotch Burghs,	2		1	
„ Counties,	5		3	
Irish Cities and Boroughs, . . .	6		1	
„ Counties,	4		1	
	78		88	

—*Ann. Reg.* 1841, p. 147.

showed a majority in the whole United Kingdom of 76 in favour of Sir R. Peel. In England the Conservative majority was 104; which was reduced to 76 by a Liberal majority of 9 in Scotland, and 19 in Ireland! A striking proof how much greater and more lasting had been the change worked in the two latter countries by the Reform Bill than the former.

58. Parliament met on the 19th August, and Mr Shaw Lefevre was elected Speaker without a division. The trial of strength, to which the country looked with such anxiety, came on upon the amendment to the Address, which was moved by Mr Stuart Wortley, which was: "That the House most respectfully express their regret at the recent increase of expenditure, its determination to provide for that increase, and its earnest desire to promote the welfare of her Majesty's subjects, and respectfully represent to her Majesty the necessity that her Ministers should enjoy the confidence of the country, which *the present Administration did not possess.*" The debate lasted four nights, and turned chiefly on the weakness of the Government, their manifold tergiversations, and the want of any settled principle in their administration, both foreign and domestic. Sir R. Peel, whose speech was loudly cheered, declared his determination to adopt a system entirely opposite. "If I exercise power," said he, "it shall be upon my conception, perhaps imperfect, perhaps mistaken, but my sincere conception, of public duty. That power I will not hold unless I can hold it conscientiously, in consistence with the maintenance of my opinions; and that power I will relinquish the moment I am satisfied that I am not supported in the maintenance of them by the confidence of this House and the people of this country." "I am convinced that if this country," said Lord John Russell in reply, "is governed by enlarged and liberal counsels, that its power and might will spread and increase, and its influence become greater and greater, and that Liberal principles will prevail, and civilisa-

tion will be spread to all parts of the globe, and you will bless millions by your acts and mankind by your union." Ministers were supported by O'Connell and the whole strength of the Irish Catholic members, as well as the Liberal majority in Scotland. But such was their unpopularity in England, that upon a division which took place on the fourth night of the debate, they were left in a minority of 91, the numbers being 360 to 269 in a house of 629, the largest upon record. The majority in the House of Lords was 72, the numbers being 168 to 96. After this decisive expression of the opinion of both Houses, but one course remained to Ministers; and accordingly, in answer to the Address, the Queen said, "Ever anxious to listen to the advice of my Parliament, I will take immediate measures for the formation of a new Administration." And on 30th August, Lord Melbourne announced in the Lords, and Lord John Russell in the Commons, that Ministers only held office till their successors were appointed, and both Houses immediately after adjourned. The resignation of Ministers was of course accepted, and the Queen sent for Sir R. Peel to form a new Administration.

59. Thus fell the Government of the Whigs, and fell never again to rise. The Liberal or movement party have been in power, indeed, for the greater part of the subsequent period, and to all appearance they are destined for a long period to hold the reins. But the Liberal is very different from the old Whig party—much more opposed to it than ever the Tory had been. These two rival parties, which so long divided the empire, were, after the termination of the contest with the Stuarts, and till the advent of the French Revolution, separated on no great questions of social or national policy; they were merely opposite competitors for power. But the case is very different with the Liberals, who, since the fall of the Whigs, have succeeded them in the administration of affairs. The proof of this is decisive; it is to be found in their legislative acts. They

have been obliged to substitute favour to the Roman Catholics for the stern hostility of the Revolution; Free Trade for the protective system, which for a century and a half had regulated their policy; and unrestricted admission of foreign shipping for the Navigation Laws, the bequest of Cromwell, and which they had so long held forth as the palladium of the empire. They have been compelled to exchange concession to the great towns for the aristocratic rule of the great families. Nor have they, in doing so, yielded merely to that change of policy which every party, even the most consistent, must adopt from the changes of times and circumstances. The alteration has been so great, and has affected so deeply their private interests, that it has evidently been the result, not of change of views, but of necessity; for they have been compelled to abandon the Corn Laws, which in the long-run, when the effect of the gold discoveries has ceased, will halve their incomes, and accept, without any reduction of the twelve millions of direct taxation exclusively affecting the land, the succession-tax, which in a few generations will double their debts.

60. It was commonly said at the time that this fall was entirely owing to the incapacity and vacillation of the Cabinet which then directed the affairs of the nation, and the want of business habits, which arose from their high birth and connections. But a very little consideration must be sufficient to convince every one that this was by no means the cause of the catastrophe. The Whig Cabinet, when it was overturned, contained many able and eloquent men, and they had sustained themselves with credit and talent against the most formidable Opposition, both in point of numbers and capacity, of which mention is made in parliamentary annals. True, their measures were vacillating, often contradictory, and sometimes little consistent with the dignity of a party really ruling the State; but the reason of that was that they did not really rule the State. After the election of 1835, their majority was so small, sel-

dom exceeding, on a vital question, fifteen or twenty in the House of Commons, that they could never be sure of carrying anything; any like a ship contending at sea against an adverse wind, they were obliged to trim their sails, sometimes in one direction, sometimes in another, in order to secure any, even the smallest, progress in head-way. The deficit in the revenue which weighed so heavily upon them, and was the immediate cause of their fall, arose indeed from the monetary system, for which they had been the first to contend, but which had been latterly cordially accepted by their opponents, and sanctioned by a unanimous vote of the House of Commons. The real cause of their overthrow is to be found in the Constitution of Parliament which they themselves had forced upon the Sovereign, and the fatal mistake committed by Earl Grey in supposing that the boroughs, returning three-fifths of the entire representation of the United Kingdom, would fall under the dominion of the territorial magnates in their vicinity, because the nomination boroughs had hitherto done so. The result of the elections in 1841, when 220 borough members in the United Kingdom were on the Liberal side, and only 181 on the Conservative, while in the counties 181 were on the Conservative, and only 72 on the Liberal, proves how completely he was mistaken in his anticipations, and how utterly erroneous was his opinion that the change was aristocratic in its tendency. The result proves that the Whigs put themselves into Schedule A as completely by the Reform Bill, as they fondly flattered themselves they had put their opponents.

61. But this is not all. Not only has the glory departed from the old Whig families from the effects of the change they introduced into the constitution, but, what is still more extraordinary, and certainly was not intended, *the ruling power has departed from the realm of England*. Strange as this result is, and little as it was anticipated from a change which the great majority of the English so vehe-

mently supported, there is nothing more certain than that it has taken place. Ever since Sir R. Peel's dissolution in 1835, a decided majority in the House of Commons has been obtained from the Scotch and Irish members, *and them alone*. If the power had been vested in the English alone, a Conservative Ministry would have been in office, and a Conservative policy pursued by the Government, from that day to this. Even in the election of 1841, when the Conservatives for a period obtained the majority, it was by the aid of a majority of 53 in Ireland and Scotland that the Liberals were enabled to make head at all against the majority of 129 against them in England. Since that time the majority of the Liberals has been always composed of Irish and Scotch members; and that of the 21 which overthrew Lord Derby's Administration in 1852, was entirely drawn from the representatives of these two nations. Nothing but this extraneous power, joined to that of the English manufacturing towns, has forced upon the English aristocracy the income-tax, the repeal of the Corn Laws, and the succession-tax, now felt by them as so sore a burden. And thus, by the effect of its own act, has the mighty realm of England, which boasted of having conquered Ireland by the force of its arms, and won Scotland by the seductions of its power, fallen practically under the government of these two comparatively weak and powerless neighbours! Time will show whether their rule will be as steady, consistent, and glorious as that of the English aristocracy, which Earl Grey, as a ruling power, destroyed, had been.

62. This extraordinary result of a movement which originated in, and was supported mainly by, the Liberals of England, is to be ascribed in Ireland without doubt to the ascendancy of

the Catholic priesthood, which, exercising an absolute sway over their flocks and their representatives, has uniformly arrayed them in opposition to the English aristocracy, justly regarded as its most formidable enemy. In Scotland it has been owing to a different cause. It has arisen from the love of independence and aspiring tendency which are inherent features in the national character, which led to the long and obstinate wars that were waged with England, and which, since the auspicious union of the two kingdoms, has sent forth its sons in quest of fortune into every quarter of the globe, and has so often raised them to power and affluence in distant realms. This aspiring and persevering disposition is closely connected with, and is in fact the main element in, the desire for self-government; and hence the Scotch burghs, twenty-three in number, have, since the passing of the Reform Bill, with one or two exceptions, produced by powerful local influence, always returned the Liberal members who have, with the Irish Catholics, kept the Liberal ministers in power. Whether this aspiring and democratic tendency will in Scotland, as it has done in so many other countries, give way to the return to Conservatism, which is the result of extended information, or the weariness and distrust which are too often the bitter lessons of experience, or the love of gain, which is not less inherent in the Scottish character, remains yet to be proved. But in the mean time it may with certainty be affirmed that these peculiarities in the Scottish character have produced important effects upon the fortunes of the empire in recent times, and given to its inhabitants an unobserved importance beyond what could have been anticipated from their numbers, wealth, or apparent influence in the realm.

CHAPTER XLVI.

INDIA, FROM THE TERMINATION OF THE MAHRATTA WAR IN 1806,
TO THE FALL OF BHURTPORE IN 1826.

1. IF there is any instinct more strongly than another implanted in the universal heart of man, it is that which leads him to repel foreign aggression and dread external subjugation. Other national feelings are partial in their operation or temporary in their effects. The lust of conquest or other violent passion is extinguished by success; the fervour of democracy wears itself out in a few years; the love of personal freedom is seen only among some particular races of men, and, even where it is most strong, cannot be relied on as likely to endure for any great length of time. But the love of country, the desire for its independence, are universal. These passions burn with even greater strength in the earlier than in the latest stages of society; they actuate alike the savage and the sage; they are coeval with the first dawn of civilisation; and when they become weakened, it may with certainty be concluded that the career of the country is drawing to a close. No memory is ever so fondly cherished among men as that of the patriot who has died in defence of his native land—none so execrated as he who has leagued with the stranger against it.

2. It is not without reason that nature has implanted this universal feeling in the human race, for the preservation of national independence is beyond all doubt the first of public blessings. So general is selfishness in mankind, that conquest is hardly ever undertaken but for the purposes of rapacity—power seldom acquired without being immediately turned to effect spoliation. In rude ages this is done by military power and the ruthless grasp of war; in later times, it is more

commonly effected under the pacific guise of legislative change. But in either case the result is the same; the property and industry of the conquered state are sacrificed to the selfish ambition of the conquering, and the interest of the subject territory is forgotten in the ceaseless aggrandisement of the ruling. So generally has experience proved this to be the case, that foreign subjugation and internal ruin are generally considered as synonymous; and the very word *conquest* indicates in its derivation the lamentation with which the transference of power to foreign hands has been attended. The only exceptions to this rule are in those cases comparatively rare—such as that of Rome in ancient, or Russia in modern times—where the advancing empire permanently incorporates the conquered territory with its original dominions, and the inhabitants of the latter are in some degree protected from the oppression of their conquerors by becoming part of their lasting possession. Yet even there the advantages consequent on conquest scarcely ever compensate its evils; the main-spring of general progress is weakened when the power of separate direction is taken away; the peace and order which the ægis of a powerful empire confers are found to be dearly purchased by its attendant burdens; and the nation which swells the train or supplies the army of a mighty conqueror often in secret mourns its chains, and prays for the defeat of the very standards to which its own fortunes seem to be indissolubly attached.

3. The BRITISH EMPIRE IN INDIA appears at first sight to form an exception to this general rule. The plains of Hindostan have, from the

very earliest times, been desolated by the arms, and held up as the reward of conquest; more even than the Italian, their inhabitants have had to lament the fatal gift of beauty. The riches of the south have never ceased to attract the cupidity of the north to the regions of the sun. The Himalaya snows have been found a feeble barrier to its resistless fury. Devastated by successive irruptions of the Tartars and other invaders, the meek and pacific inhabitants of Hindostan have drained to the very dregs the cup of humiliation and misery from the conquerors of the north. So complete has been their prostration, so great the multitude of savage warriors who in successive irruptions have poured into their plains, that their descendants have become mixed in vast numbers with those of the vanquished people. And the present inability of India to make head against foreign invasion is mainly owing to the diversity of races, religions, and tongues with which it is crowded, in consequence of previous conquests, and the impossibility of uniting such a heterogeneous mass in any durable league for the maintenance of their common independence. To a people so situated, subjugation by the English seemed, contrary to the usual case, an unmixed blessing, and the steady rule of a powerful Christian and civilised government a happy change after the savage inroads of Mogul conquerors, or the devastating strife of independent chiefs.

4. In many respects the change to European from Asiatic government has undoubtedly been an advantage to the people of India. How great soever were the abilities, how splendid the achievements, how considerable even the passing benefits of their Asiatic conquerors, they never were able to establish a powerful government, or found a lasting dynasty. With the death of the mighty conqueror who had founded the empire, the huge fabric soon became weakened, and at length fell to pieces. The seductions of the seraglio, the corruptions of the throne, proved fatal to the rude energy of the north; and out of the ruins of

the empire arose a multitude of independent rajahs, who contended for its spoils, and, leaving to the meek or effeminate sultan the phantom of royalty, secured to themselves its substantial advantages. To an empire so situated there can be no doubt that the conquest of the entire country by the English opened, in the first instance, immense benefits. It removed in a great degree, over the whole of its vast extent, the evils of internal war, stopped the devastation of one rajah's territories by another, closed the eternal pillage of the ryots by the intermediate officers of the government, and established the inappreciable blessings of internal peace and unrestricted interior communication. So great are these advantages, so real these benefits, that they have overcome, in a large part of the people, one of the strongest of human desires—that of national independence—and caused their incorporation with the British dominions to be hailed, in the first instance at least, with joy by the greater part of the sable inhabitants of Hindostan.

5. But all this notwithstanding, a considerable portion of the people would willingly exchange, after a short experience, the deathlike stillness of British protection for the stormy animation of their native governments. The former is a peaceful arena, in which, *by them*, nothing but the humblest prizes are to be gained; the latter a warlike theatre, in which principalities and power are the rewards of the victorious soldier. It is not in human nature that the last should not be preferred by those by whom its prizes may be drawn, whatever it may be by those by whom its burdens are to be borne. Although, accordingly, the inhabitants of the British dominions are in general in a state of tranquillity, and bow the neck without resistance to a foreign yoke, which they deem the decree of fate, yet they are in reality very far indeed from being contented with their lot. They will doubtless endeavour to achieve their independence as soon as a favourable opportunity occurs for doing so; and the first great defeat on the plains of Hindostan will be the

signal for a general insurrection of the native powers against the British rule.*

6. The progress of the British in India has been nothing but one series of conquests, interrupted, but not stopped, by a terrible defeat beyond its mountain barrier, which seemed to forebode that the lords of Hindostan were not destined to extend their dominion into Central Asia. The Mahratta states—Gwalior, parts of Burmah and Nepal, Pegu, Scinde, Lahore, Oude—have been successively acquired; neither the mountain fastnesses of the Ghorkhas, nor the death-bestridden jungles of Arracan, nor the far-famed bastions of Bhurtpore, nor the swift horsemen of the Pindarrees, nor the disciplined battalions of the Sikhs, have been able to withstand its progress. The show even of resistance is at an end; independence is unknown over the vast extent of the Indian peninsula. The empire thus formed constitutes, with the tributary states, which in fact form part of it, the greatest compact dominion on the face of the earth. From the Himalaya snows to the green slopes of Cape Comorin, from the mouths of the Indus to the delta of the Irrawaddy, it forms a vast peninsula, estimated as containing 1,385,000 square miles, or nearly ten times the area of France, of which more than one-half (933,700) is subject to the direct dominion of Great Britain. The total boundary by sea and land of this immense region is 11,200 miles, of which 4500 are formed by the ocean; and the remainder by the vast range of mountains which, with its extended branches, stretches all round it on the north and east, from the frontiers of Gedrosia to the extreme southern point of Cochin-China. The inhabitants of this empire, subject to the direct government of England, are now, since the incorporation of Oude, about 135,000,000; the protected or tributary states are 41,000,000 more. Great as these numbers are, they are inconsiderable in proportion to the extent of the country they inhabit. In the British provinces the inhabitants are 157

to the square mile; in the native states, 74—numbers respectively not one-half of the densely or thinly peopled countries of Europe. About a third of the whole territories of the Company are still in a state of nature, and they might maintain in ease and affluence double their present inhabitants.

7. One material source of discontent and cause of impoverishment to India, so common with all conquered states, is, that a large proportion of its wealth is annually drawn away and spent in the ruling state. About £2,500,000 is every year paid away in England from Indian revenue to holders of East India stock, civil servants of the Company, or military charges paid at home. At least an equal sum is probably annually remitted to this country from the fortunes brought home by its civil and military officers, or the mercantile profits made by the numerous and enterprising traders who, since the throwing open of the trade, have succeeded to its lucrative traffic.* Such a sum, annually drawn off and spent abroad, would be a severe drain upon the resources of any country, but it becomes doubly so when the value of the money thus abstracted is taken into consideration. The wages of labour are usually 2½d. or 3d. a-day in Hindostan, so that £5,000,000 a-year is fully equal to £30,000,000 in this country. We know what a serious burden the interest of the national debt is to this country, which is nearly of the same amount, though it is for the most part spent at home, and of course not lost to its industry; but what would it be if it were annually drawn away and expended in ministering to the luxury of the Hindoo rajahs, or swelling the gorgeous establishments of Calcutta?

8. Unfelt by the ryots, whose wants seldom extend beyond the cultivation of their humble allotments, the monopoly of all situations of trust or importance by the British is a most galling and disheartening circumstance to

* Written in 1856. How completely was the prediction verified in the very next year, when the great revolt broke out!

* It is calculated that the sums now (1864) annually drawn from India to Great Britain are nearly £10,000,000.

the native higher classes in India. It is felt as peculiarly so by the Moham-medans, because their fathers were the last conquerors of the country, and but for the subsequent disasters they have experienced, they would have been in the possession of all the situations of dignity and emolument. They form a numerous body, amounting to 15,000,000 souls, but still more important from the elevated class in society to which many of them formerly belonged. With the exception of that part of them which is enrolled in the army, the great majority of this class is in a state of sullen discontent, and ready to take advantage of the first opportunity which may occur to dispossess the English, and place themselves in all the situations which they at present hold. None but Europeans can hold a higher situation than that of lieutenant in the army, or a very subordinate collector or other functionary in the civil service.* We have only to ask ourselves what would be our feelings if the whole situations of dignity and importance in the British Island

* "Quels sont les plus hauts rangs offerts à l'ambition des hautes classes? Dans l'armée un grade de Soabadar-Major, qui équivaut à peu-près à celui d'adjudant sous-officier en France; dans l'administration, quelques places d'huissiers et de courriers. Quand sous l'administration de Lord William Bentinck la Cour des Directeurs avait eu l'idée de donner un 'Writership,' c'est-à-dire, une place dans le service civil, au fils du célèbre Ram-Mohun-Roy, qui avait reçu une éducation Européenne, et était certainement supérieur en intelligence à un grand nombre de ses employés, cette proposition souleva une telle tempête parmi les bénéficiaires qu'il fallut y renoncer. Toutes les carrières, tous les emplois honorables, leur étant ainsi fermés, il s'ensuit que les fortunes aisées et les classes moyennes disparaissent successivement sans se remplacer, jusqu'à ce que dans un temps donné il n'existera plus qu'une *égalité de misère*, qui nivellera cinquante millions d'individus. J'inclus cette fois les états vassaux, qui viendront se dissoudre dans le même creuset. L'Angleterre, comme le vampire fabuleux, aura tout absorbé; il ne restera aucune sommité pour s'élever au-dessus des masses, parmi lesquelles on ne comptera plus que l'artisan, le cultivateur, le manoeuvre, et le gendarme: rien qu'un peuple de serfs, jouissant d'une liberté nominale annulée par le besoin, et n'ayant d'autre alternative que de travailler pour le profit exclusif de ses maîtres."—WARREN, *L'Inde Anglaise*, iii. 252, 253.

were monopolised by thirty or forty thousand black intruders from Hindostan, who carried back the wealth made on the banks of the Thames to be spent on those of the Ganges, to be able to appreciate the feeling of the people of India in the corresponding circumstances in which they are actually placed.

9. It is another circumstance of no small moment in considering the position of the British in India, and the chances they have of easily maintaining their ascendancy in it, that until within the last few years, few of the commercial advantages which might reasonably have been expected from a union with Great Britain have been experienced by the inhabitants of Hindostan.* The export trade of Great Britain to India, indeed, has been very considerable of late years, and now (1864) on an average amounts to above £16,000,000 a-year; but this, previous to 1856, had by no means been attended by a corresponding increase of Indian exports to Great Britain. On the contrary, the exports of India to England had been either stationary or declining for a number of years back prior to the great change in the tariff by Sir R. Peel in 1842. The reason is, that in our intercourse with India we thought only of the interests of our own merchants and manufacturers, not of those of our distant and *unrepresented* Eastern possessions. We boasted of the extraordinary fact that the manufacturers of Manchester and

* "For many years great commercial injustice was done by England to British India. High, indeed prohibitory, duties were laid on its sugar, rum, coffee, &c., to favour similar products grown in the West Indies. Still worse, we compelled the Hindoos to receive cotton and other manufactures from England at merely nominal duties (2½ per cent); while at the very same time 50 per cent was demanded here on any attempt to introduce the cotton goods of India."—*Commons' Paper*, No. 227, April 1846. The same principle was adopted with regard to silk and other articles. The result was the destruction of the finer class of cotton, silk, and other manufactures, without adopting the plea of Strafford in Ireland during the reign of Charles I.—namely, the founding of the linen trade as a substitute for that of woollen, which was to be extinguished in order to appease the English handloom weaver."—M. MARTIN'S *British India*, p. 543.

Glasgow could undersell those of Hindostan in the manufacture of cotton goods from the raw material grown on the banks of the Ganges; but we forgot at what price to the artisans of India this advantage had been gained to those of this country. Every bale of cotton goods sent out from Great Britain to India deprives several manufacturers in Hindostan of bread. British manufactures are admitted into India at a merely nominal duty; but Indian manufactures coming to this country were, till very recently, for the most part burdened with the usual heavy import-duties, which even at present are 25 or 30 per cent, and before Sir R. Peel's reduction of tariffs, were in many cases 150, and even 200 per cent.* It is not surprising that in such circumstances, with *reciprocity all on one side*, the industry of India should not have reaped the advantages which might have been expected from its connection with Great Britain. If Calcutta had been the seat of government, and England the distant conquered possession, it is probable the relative scale of duties would have been reversed, and we should have had little cause to congratulate ourselves on our commercial intercourse with the East. The proportion which our export trade to India bears to the amount of its population is only £16,000,000 to 176,000,000 people—*little more than one shilling and tenpence a-head*; while to Canada the proportion is £1, 15s. a-head; to the West Indies, £1, 18s. a-head; to Amer-

ica, 17s. a-head; and to Australia, on an average of years before the extraordinary start of the gold diggings, not less than £7 or £8.†

10. The great cause of this extreme poverty of the inhabitants of India, is to be found in the heat of the climate, and the importance, in many places, of *works of irrigation* to keep in existence agricultural industry. Unlike the temperate regions of the globe, which are copiously watered by the perennial rains of heaven, the soil of India is for five months in the year deluged by frightful floods, and for the other seven parched up by excessive drought. In these circumstances irrigation, or the artificial supply of water by means of tanks during the dry season, is in most places an indispensable condition both of animal and vegetable life: it is to the territory of India what the floods of the Nile are to that of Egypt. But for it the whole soil turns in a single season into a wilderness. The immense floods which overspread the earth during the rainy season furnish water in abundance for the artificial supply of the land and the inhabitants during the dry period; but the tanks and canals, by which alone it can be preserved or distributed over the country, not only require a considerable expenditure of capital in the first instance, but a constant application of labour to keep them up. But for this they would turn into blowing sand during the dry season, or be washed away by the floods during the rainy. As an artificial supply

* "Pour protéger le fermier qui émigre au Canada, le filé de l'Inde se voit frappé d'un droit de 30 pour 100. Pour satisfaire à l'avarice et gorgé les colons Anglais des Antilles, le café, le coton, la laine, le teck, la graine de lin, la soie, la cochenille de Calcutta, de Madras, et de Bombay, doivent payer 100, 200, 300 pour 100. C'est-à-dire, pendant qu'on oblige l'Indien à nourrir l'industrie Anglaise, on refuse tout débouché à la sienne. C'est un habile ouvrier, un patient agriculteur, un tisserand consommé, auquel on interdit le travail, et qui n'ayant pas d'autres ressources, se voit condamné à mourir de faim."—WARREN, iii. 93, 94.

† The true principle on the subject was adopted by the East India Company on 11th May 1842, on the motion of Sir Charles Forbes, aided by the able and indefatigable friend of the colonies, Mr Montgomery Martin—viz., "That, in the opinion of this Court, the territories under the government of the East India Company ought to be treated as integral portions of the British empire; and that as a revision of the British tariff is taking place, this Court, in fulfilment of its duty to their fellow-subjects in India, do again petition both Houses of Parliament, praying for a *complete reciprocity of trade* between India and England, which, if fully and fairly established, will confer mutual and extensive benefits on both countries, and materially contribute to the security and permanence of the British power and influence in the Eastern hemisphere."—See *Asiatic Journal*, May 1842.

These principles were in great part carried into practice by Sir R. Peel in his tariff of

of water, accordingly, is indispensable to cultivation in most parts of India, so the ceaseless efforts of industry are required to render perennial the prolific stream; and whenever, either from external violence or internal neglect, it has been suffered to fail, and the dykes and mounds essential to its continuance to fall into decay, population disappears, industry ceases, the jungle springs up, and the tiger and the rhinoceros become again the lords of creation.

11. If nature has rendered India dependent on irrigation for the means

of cultivation and the development of agricultural industry, she has been bountiful beyond example in furnishing the means of affording it to the inhabitants. Snowy mountains in every part of the torrid zone furnish the only reservoirs for perennial supplies of water; and it is for this purpose that the stony girdle of the globe has been placed in these regions. But in addition to the vast snowy range of the Himalaya, which shuts in the Indian peninsula over its whole extent to the north, and by the innumerable streams which flow into the Indus,

1842, by which the duties on Indian goods of all sorts were lowered most materially—with what effect on the industry of British India may be judged of by the following table:—

Years.	IMPORTS TO INDIA.		INDIAN EXPORTS.		INDIAN EXPORTS TO BRITAIN.
	Merchandise	Treasure.	Merchandise	Treasure	
	Rupees	Rupees	Rupees	Rupees	Rupees
1834-35	4.26.11.065	1.89.30.233	7.99.34.203	19.47.407	3 05 69 730
1835-36	4.78.18 475	2.14.69.651	11.10 64.955	10.81.093	3 97 53 038
1836-37	5.53 69.902	2 03.61 672	13.24.01 832	26 39.340	4.91.54 702
1837-38	5.03.24.711	2.64.01.013	11 24 27.801	34.06.563	4.35 28 221
1838-39	5.24.06.726	8.01 09.195	11.77.47 693	34.79.058	4.51.31.593
1839-40	5.83.12.368	1.94.52.642	10.86.27.456	47.05 231	5 96 99.519
1840-41	8.41.50.405	1.78.62.533	13.45 55.842	34 64 859	7.05.43 881
1841-42	7.75.85.563	1 84.13 353	13.18 52 176	51 50 757	7.12 07.484
1842-43	7.00.36.029	3.44.32 916	13.55.18.246	21.57.966	5.82 09.658
1843-44	8.81.79 974	4.79 46.791	17.25.34.772	74 60.763	7.76.01 283
1844-45	10.75 40.659	3.75 24.718	16.59 02.124	1 10.68.402	7.24.06.197
1845-46	9.08.74.794	2.49.59 536	17.02.86.734	81.60.284	6.68 89.433
1846-47	8.89.66.645	2 93.99.224	15.35.54 375	7.11 38 696	6.56.16.865
1847-48	8.59.76.150	1.97.83.914	13 31.23.970	1 42.60 380	5.68.38 267
1848-49	8 34.48.042	4.29.40.033	16.08.85.018	2 53.97.425	6.19.19.593
1849-50	10.29.98.886	3 39.68 074	17.31.22.993	97.12.441	7.02.64.706
1850-51	11.55.87.888	3.81.18.088	18.16.41.496	54.12.891	8.10.40.164
1851-52	12 24.54.902	5.05.20.590	19.87.92.537	91.90.889	7.13.88.884
1852-53	10.07.08.816	6 83.13.776	20.46.46.330	1.05.52.299	7.37.78.348

—M. MARTIN'S *British India*; Appendix, iii.

But these results have become still more apparent in recent years;—as the following table will show:—

Years.	Imports of India from Great Britain.	Exports of India to Great Britain.	Exported by India to Great Britain.		Silver Bullion imported by India from Great Britain.*
			Raw Cotton.	Wool.	
			lb.	lb.	
1854	£9,620,710	£10,672,862	119,836,009	14,965,191	£286,303
1855	10,353,475	12,668,732	145,179,216	14,288,595	3,887,434
1856	11,024,518	17,262,851	180,496,624	15,886,578	6,166,407
1857†	12,191,960	18,650,223	250,388,144	19,870,741	8,941,498
1858†	17,394,400	14,989,030	132,722,576	17,333,507	3,437,675
1859†	20,782,853	15,244,869	192,330,880	14,363,403	11,957,285
1860	17,684,598	15,106,597	204,141,168	20,214,173	6,187,310
1861†	17,053,855	21,968,752	869,040,448	19,161,004	6,258,179
1862†	15,346,426	34,133,551	892,654,528	17,959,404	6,903,865
1863†	...	48,484,517	494,420,784	20,670,111	6,229,439

* Approximately.

† Indian Mutiny.

‡ Cotton Famine.

—*Statistical Abstract*, No. xl, pp. 18, 40, 41, and 61.

the Ganges, and the Brahmapootra, furnishes a perennial supply of water to the Punjab and the whole valley of the Ganges in the north of the peninsula, another boon has been given by nature to southern India, which is peculiar to that portion of the globe. The monsoon, which blows for six months in the year over the Indian Ocean, strikes on the Ghauts, or range of precipitous mountains which, like the Andes in America, form its western boundary, and from whence many of the chief rivers of central and southern India flow in long and devious courses to the Eastern Ocean. The periods when the rivers, fed by the monsoon rains, are swollen, are those when the reservoirs of the Himalaya are not unlocked by the rays of a vertical sun; and when the streams flowing from the snowy mountains begin, like the waters of the Nile, to rise, the moisture of the monsoon ceases to swell those rivers which are nourished by it. Thus northern and southern India is, each in its season, provided with the means of irrigation; and the skill and energy of man may, by means of tanks and canals, carry the fertilising stream into every field and garden of Hindostan.

12. India, though a great continent, is essentially a *maritime* country; and the power which has the command of the ocean is sure, in the long-run, to have that of the land also. From the mouth of the Indus to the extreme point of the promontory of Arracan is a distance, in a direct line, of 4000 miles; and each coast of India stretches 2000 miles from Cape Comorin to the mouth of the Indus on one side, and to that of the Ganges on the other. So important is this great extent of sea-coast, and so vast the advantages which it offers to whichever power enjoys it, that it may be considered as decisive of any serious war in Hindostan. Alexander was foiled because he did not, England has succeeded because she did, enjoy it. The interior of the peninsula is intersected by numerous mountain-ranges, lofty plateaux, arid deserts, and deep rivers, which render internal communication

always difficult, often impossible. Until a vast system of canals and railroads is established throughout every part of India, which would require a century and immense funds for its completion, nothing can compensate the want of a command of the sea-coast.* If the Russians ever attempt the conquest of India, the greatest difficulty with which they will have to contend will be, neither the arid mountains of Afghanistan, nor the terrors of the Bolan or Khyber Pass, by which alone access can be obtained to Hindostan, nor the dense and disciplined battalions which will await them when they reach the passage of the Indus at Attock. It will be the fact that those battalions will be close to their own resources, drawn from the rich plains of India and the encircling ocean, the true basis of British military operations; while those of the invaders will have to be painfully brought over mountain-paths a thousand miles in length. The siege of Sebastopol tells us what is the result of such a disparity in the means of obtaining the supplies of war.

13. It is only within these few years, however, that such beneficent public works, creative of wealth, essential to existence, have been constructed by the modern rulers of the country. Wherever, till very recently, you saw vestiges of a magnificent canal, a splendid aqueduct, a life-teeming tank, you were sure you were gazing on the work of some Hindoo or Mohammedan sovereign, or some of their successors. Almost all of these beneficent public works had fallen into decay before the career of British conquest, and with them disappeared nearly the whole population which had been nourished by their fertilising streams. They have not absolutely perished, but migrated in sorrow and poverty to some of the great towns or other districts where nature has been more bountiful. The Company, however, had, even before Lord Dalhousie's administration, which began a new era in these respects, done something for internal improvement. Between 1817 and 1843, they had

expended £500,000 to the west of the Jumna, and £200,000 to the east of that river, in works of irrigation. But these works were trifling compared to the necessities of the country. The extent to which the evil has gone, from the long-continued neglect on the part of the British Government to carry into execution the great public works which are essential to industry and cultivation, would be deemed incredible, if not proved by incontestable evidence. Lord Ellenborough recently said in his place in Parliament, that in the course of one of his official journeys from Calcutta to Delhi, his progress was delayed by having to cross in ferry-boats *fifty-six rivers*, the bridges of which had been broken down, without any prospect of their being repaired. In the year 1827, no fewer than eleven hundred tanks burst in the district of North Arcot alone, and consequently the means of cultivating the country were wholly lost, although it had been for a quarter of a century under British protection. The rich alluvial plains of the Doab, once fertilised by the canals of the Mogul emperors, have in great part become a wilderness. Clumps of mango-trees, planted around the former deserted abodes, alone indicate, at distant intervals, as the solitary ash-trees around what was once a garden in the Highland valley, where the abode of happy and industrious man had been. The magnificent fabric of irrigation formerly established, and which rendered the country a perfect garden, went to ruin in the days of the last Mogul princes, and has not as yet been restored by the Company: the tanks are dried up, the mounds broken down or destroyed; and a few hollows filled with brushwood, and tenanted by wild beasts or serpents, alone indicate where the fertilising streams had formerly flowed. At the distance of a few miles from Delhi the country is entirely deserted; you meet only ruined temples, fallen pillars, and the mounds which tell where habitations had been; and if you ask the Mussulman whence this devastation has come, and whither the power of his fathers has fled, he replies, with a

sigh, that all efforts are vain against the decree of fate.

14. In justice to the British Government, it must be added that this neglect of the public works, upon which the prosperity of Asiatic communities is entirely dependent, has been owing to the most potent of all causes—namely, necessity. It is well known in the East that public assistance is indispensable to general prosperity, and that money expended on useful undertakings yields sixty, and even a hundred fold. A policy purely selfish would have made such outlay for its own sake. The real reason was, that, in consequence of the peculiar position of the British power in India, every farthing that could be spared or saved required to be reserved for warlike operations. Conquest to it was not the result of ambition, it was the price of existence. In a country peopled by 175,000,000 souls, and which is to be really kept in subjection by less than 50,000 British soldiers, 8000 miles from their own country, it may readily be understood that the power of Government must rest upon opinion. It is by the prestige of irresistible force that not only is additional strength to be gained, but that already acquired is to be preserved. Towards the maintenance of this moral influence one thing was indispensably necessary, and that was *unbroken success*. Situated as the Company was, it could never be for its interest to engage in foreign wars, for that was to incur certain expense and probable risk for remote and contingent advantage. But from the obviously precarious nature of its position, and the great distance of the centre of its resources, it was constantly exposed to attack; and when assailed, it had no chance of salvation but in immediate and decisive victory. Protracted warfare was perilous, early defeat would be fatal to it. The misfortunes of Colonel Monson's division in 1804 exposed it to danger; the Afghanistan disaster in 1842 brought it to the verge of ruin. Thus it was indispensable that it should be at all times in a state of full military preparation, not only

to repel aggression, but quickly to destroy the assailant; and intermission for a single year in this state of costly watchfulness might at any time expose it to destruction. It is a clear proof of what was the real cause of the long-continued indifference of the Company's government to public improvements, that from the time that the British power was thoroughly established in India, and its authority was paramount from the Himalaya to Cape Comorin, the former niggardly system in regard to public grants was abandoned, and in the latter years of Lord Dalhousie's administration from £1,500,000 to £2,000,000 annually were devoted to the construction of great public works, which will surpass, when completed, the fabled days of Mogul magnificence. Since the British dominion was fully established by the defeat of the revolt in 1858, the sums expended by the British Government have been from £3,000,000 to £4,000,000 sterling a-year.

15. One serious and widespread cause of injury, in a part of British India, has been the *Zemindar system*; and its partial failure affords a signal instance of the danger of attempting to extend the institutions which have proved most successful in one part of the world to another differently situated, and inhabited by a different race of men. When Lord Cornwallis first introduced this system into these conquered provinces, nothing, according to European ideas, could afford a fairer prospect of success, for it proposed to fix at a moderate rate the *perpetual set-*

tlement of the ryots' quit-rent; and in the collectors of districts, styled the zemindars, it was hoped, would be laid the foundation of a feudal aristocracy which, without oppressing the people, the usual source of Asiatic grandeur, might be bound to the Government by the strong bond of mutual interest. But the result has in some measure disappointed these expectations; and the only effect of the system has been, in many cases, to ruin the zemindars, and impoverish the people. The reason is, that the quit-rent, though light in comparison of that which had been previously imposed and *nominally* required, was often much more than, under existing circumstances, could be *actually* and regularly paid. The Mogul princes required three-fifths of the produce, but the weakness of their government precluded them from levying it: the British required only two-fifths, but the collectors were compelled to pay it entire, and payment of all arrears was enforced with rigid exactitude. Many of these zemindars could not pay their rent to the treasury, or if they did so, it was only by extorting it with merciless rigour from the unhappy cultivators. Thus the result of this system, so well conceived in principle, so plausible in appearance, has often been, in practice, to ruin the permanent collectors, who, it was hoped, would form a middle class attached to the Government, and depress the cultivators, from whose labours not only the chief part of the national wealth, but two-thirds of the national revenue, was derived.* Yet is

* Years.	BENGAL.			MADRAS.			BOMBAY.		
	Revenue.	Charges.	Surplus.	Revenue.	Charges.	Deficit.	Revenue.	Charges.	Deficit.
1839	9,561,444	8,437,736	1,123,708	3,533,873	3,581,406	...	1,445,296	2,088,222	637,926
1840	9,741,240	8,943,099	798,141	3,561,313	3,352,076	211,237	1,827,922	1,966,380	138,458
1841	10,437,661	9,367,403	1,070,258	3,593,910	3,356,993	236,917	1,750,984	1,996,073	244,189
1842	10,829,614	9,911,751	917,863	3,628,949	3,380,784	248,165	1,940,689	1,991,530	50,841
1843	11,523,983	10,122,149	1,401,834	3,601,997	3,342,573	259,424	2,046,725	2,204,121	157,396
1844	11,863,338	9,575,638	2,287,700	3,612,417	3,479,580	132,837	1,918,007	2,496,173	577,666
1845	12,147,338	10,170,210	1,977,128	3,539,218	3,623,599	85,381	2,047,380	2,669,910	522,530
1846	12,900,254	10,445,369	2,454,885	3,631,929	3,449,619	182,310	2,120,824	2,662,100	541,276
1847	11,847,924	10,516,089	1,331,835	3,638,589	3,373,445	265,144	1,990,895	2,633,380	642,485
1848	12,083,936	10,636,307	1,447,629	3,607,235	3,221,485	385,750	2,475,894	2,929,620	453,726
1849	14,063,511	11,033,855	3,029,656	3,643,074	3,198,378	444,696	2,489,346	2,999,119	509,773
1850	13,879,966	10,818,429	3,061,537	3,625,015	3,212,415	412,600	2,744,955	3,084,450	341,510
1851	13,487,081	10,070,120	3,416,961	3,744,372	3,244,598	499,774	2,178,777	3,151,870	973,093
1852	14,016,120	11,239,370	2,776,750	3,766,150	3,307,192	458,958	2,196,187	3,279,116	1,082,929

Independent of the home charges at each presidency.

there another side of the question; and results on a great scale demonstrate that, in spite of the many evils to the zemindars which this system has introduced, it has, upon the whole, been beneficial to the ryots. Periodical famines, which, before the perpetual settlement, were the scourge of the province of Bengal, have been comparatively rare since its introduction; and while the other provinces of India, in general, exhibit a deficit, that of Bengal, out of a land-rent of £14,000,000, exhibits a surplus of £2,800,000. And sorely as the ill effects of the system have been experienced, it has never been deemed possible to alter it; for to do so would be to do away with what was justly held out as its chief recommendation—namely, its *permanent* character—and expose Government to endless applications for remission, both from the zemindars and their impoverished subjects.

16. The zemindar system is not universally established in India. In the northern provinces the old *Village system* is still preserved—a system so thoroughly adapted to the circumstances and wants of the country, and so associated with the habits of its inhabitants, that it has existed from the earliest times, survived all the changes of dynasty or conquest, and formed the nucleus round which society has perpetually been re-formed, when all but destroyed by the successive inroads of northern conquerors. According to it, each village forms a little community, governed by elders chosen on the most democratic principles, and with its adjacent territory composes a little world within itself, independent, if left alone, of any external appliances. The land-tax which it pays to Government is received by its collectors from the elected rulers of the village, and they apportion out the burden with the most scrupulous care and perfect fairness among the different inhabitants. In this little community the professions are all hereditary. The tailors, the shoemakers, the bakers, the soldiers, succeed to their fathers' avoca-

tions: no one either thinks of leaving his, or can do so. So deeply rooted is this system over all India, as indeed generally in the East, that it survives all the convulsions of time. In vain does the storm of war roll over the little society; in vain does the torch of the Mogul or the Affghan consume their dwellings; in vain are they dispersed and driven into the abodes of the jackal or the tiger. When the tempest ceases, the little community again rises from its ashes, the scattered flock return to their former dwellings, “rebuild with haste their fallen walls, and exult to see the smoke ascend from their native village.”

17. It is not to be supposed, from this long catalogue of omissions, that the English government in India has been a source of unmixed evil to the inhabitants of the country. It has been in many respects a decided benefit, as is decisively proved by the fact, that the produce of the whole country is estimated by the most competent statisticians to be now 70 per cent more than it was a quarter of a century ago. This proves that, although numerous and serious calamities have resulted from the land being subjected to the dominion of a power so far distant, and in many respects so different from that of India, yet, viewed in its entire effects, it has proved a benefit, and that the substitution of the steady administration of a Christian and civilised, instead of the fitful oppression of a Mogul or Mohammedan ruling power, has, upon the whole, been advantageous. And this important fact encourages the hope that, if the British dominion in India endures long enough to permit the great improvements undertaken during Lord Dalhousie's administration, and since the suppression of the revolt, to produce their natural effects, the public revenue, as well as the industrial resources of the country, will be more than doubled. If the railways, canals, and other public works which are indispensable to the development of private industry, and which in the East must be undertaken by the Government, are once executed,

no limit can be assigned to the impulse which, under an administration that forcibly retains the peninsula in peace, may be given to its population, riches, and revenue.

18. Towards this object, however, there is one indispensable requisite, and that is, that the commercial policy of England towards India should be settled on a footing of REAL RECIPROCITY. The way to do this is obvious: admit Indian produce of every description into the British Islands on the same terms as British produce is admitted into Hindostan. Seek no advantage in commercial intercourse with our Indian empire that you are not willing to concede to it in return. Act as you would wish it to do if Calcutta was the seat of government, and Great Britain the subject and distant province. Different opinions may be entertained on the point, how far the natives of India can with safety be admitted to any considerable part of the offices of trust and emolument which are at present engrossed by the English. It may be unhappily true, that they are disqualified by nature and habit from exercising any of the rights of freemen; but that they are eminently laborious, and fitted to take advantage of every opening which can be afforded to their industry, is universally admitted. What a boundless field for Indian enterprise would be afforded by the immense wealth and vast manufacturing acquirements of Great Britain, if the produce of Hindostan was admitted on the just terms of entire reciprocity, and that vast region were really treated as a distant province of the empire! Under such a system, coupled with a parental administration in regard to grants to public works, such as have honourably distinguished Lord Dalhousie's administration, it is not unreasonable to expect that in twenty years our exports to India may amount to £30,000,000 a-year; still, not more than 4s. a-head for the entire population. Nor would such just and generous conduct to an unrepresented, though vast empire, be less expedient and beneficial to the immediate commercial interests of the

ruling state; for towards a great sale of our manufactures in India one thing is indispensable, and that is, the means of purchasing them to its inhabitants; and how is that to be conferred, unless an adequate market is afforded to their own industry?

19. In one particular of vital importance to the manufacturing interests of Great Britain, its neglect of the agricultural interests of India has been unaccountable, and may in the end prove calamitous. India is a great cotton-growing country; England is a great cotton-consuming country, but from defect of climate cannot grow an ounce of it. Is it possible to conceive a combination of circumstances in which entire freedom of trade might be introduced with more effect, and produce more beneficial results to the British empire on both sides of the ocean? On the one side, a boundless market for an important article of agricultural produce; on the other, certainty of supply of the essential article of a great manufacture, from within the empire itself. Yet, strange to say, this obvious and reciprocal advantage has been entirely overlooked, and England has been content to be dependent on America, a jealous and sometimes hostile state, for the supply of this vital material for its manufacturing industry! The secret of this strange anomaly is to be found in the interested and selfish policy of the British Government, which, pressed by important manufacturing interests at home, has sacrificed the present welfare of its Indian possessions, and the future independence of the whole empire, to the desire of getting the raw material of the cotton fabrics at the cheapest possible rates. Nature has not conferred upon the Indian peninsula the immense advantages of which she has been so prodigal to the basin of the Mississippi. No vast network of navigable streams, such as pour into the great artery of that noble river, brings the means of transporting cotton by water to every man's door. To supply this defect, and enable the cotton-growing districts of India to compete with those of America, it was

indispensable, by means of railroads and canals, to confer those advantages upon them which nature had denied them, or by protecting duties to compensate for the want of the natural modes of transport enjoyed by America. The first cost money, and therefore was for long not thought of; the second was deemed objectionable by our manufacturers at home, who looked only to purchasing their raw material in the cheapest market, albeit that ~~an~~ enemy. Hence the neglect of a branch of cultivation in India in which the English markets, had they been permitted to reap the benefit, would have doubled the agricultural riches of the country,—and the continued dependence of the most important branch of our manufactures at home upon a jealous foreign state, by whom it may at any moment be cut, and ruin brought upon hundreds of thousands of our industrious workmen.*

20. There is one peculiarity of Indian society which is very important, and singularly augments the difficulty of meeting by extraordinary taxation any serious extra expense in the public administration. This is the impossibility of making any material addition to the *indirect* taxes. Strange to say, the people who submit without a murmur to the payment of two or even three fifths of their rude produce to Government, could not by any effort be brought to acquiesce in any considerable addition to the tax on salt, opium, or any article of consumption. The reason is, that they are accustomed to the first, which from the earliest ages has formed the main source of revenue in all the Oriental states; but they are not accustomed to the last, which has sprung up with the wide diffusion of comfort in the middle class, from the stability of government and comparative freedom of Europe. Indirect taxation is, comparatively speaking, unknown in the East, except in regard to salt and opium, the chief articles of consumption beyond the ne-

cessaries of life, not because the sultans lack inclination to exact it, but because their subjects have not the means of paying it. They regard indirect taxation as an unjustifiable and insupportable invasion upon their rights, and it is well understood that any considerable addition to the tax on salt or opium would produce a rebellion which might endanger the Government. In fact, it would be not more impolitic to attempt, than impossible to carry into execution, any such innovation; for such is the poverty of the people, and the limited extent of their artificial wants, that they could not purchase articles, the price of which was enhanced in any sensible degree by taxation—so that the tax would defeat itself. But this circumstance constitutes a most serious difficulty in Indian government, which in European is comparatively unknown, and goes far to explain the stationary condition of the Indian revenue, notwithstanding the great addition to the territories of the Company during the last forty years.

21. The revenue of India has increased with the vast increase of its territorial acquisitions of late years, but by no means in the proportion that might have been expected from their magnitude, and still less on a level with the necessary expenses which have been attendant on their acquisition. The net revenue before the revolt was about £26,000,000 a-year, but the expenditure was £28,000,000, leaving a deficit of £2,000,000. Twenty years ago, the income was only £20,800,000; but the expenditure was little more than £18,750,000, showing a surplus of above £1,000,000. This is a very remarkable circumstance, and but for the explanation of its causes, already given, would appear incredible. There is now strong reason to hope that, if peace is preserved in India, and the great works set on foot by Lord Dalhousie, and since the suppression of the revolt, are carried into complete execution, the surplus will again be restored, and the Government be enabled to complete those still greater improvements which have since been

* Written in 1856. How entirely verified by the disruption of America in 1861, and the consequent cotton famine, fraught with such disastrous consequences in the British Islands!

commenced and are alone required to develop fully the immense industrial and agricultural resources of the country.*

22. It is not surprising that so much difficulty has been experienced in making the revenue of India keep pace with the extension of its territory, and the consequent increase of its necessary expenditure; for such have been the effects of the jealous commercial policy of the British Government, that so far from the native manufacturing indus-

try of the country having, before the last few years, increased under its administration—at least as indicated by the returns of exports and imports—it had signally declined. In 1805, the Company possessed only 38,000,000 subjects in the territory directly subject to their government, and the exports of these were under 25,000,000 of rupees; in 1835 their subjects were above 100,000,000, but their entire exports were only 22,500,000 rupees.†

* MEAN REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE OF INDIA.

	Revenue.	Expenditure.
1832, 1833, 1834,	£20,837,000	£19,751,000
1840, 1841, 1842,	21,239,000	23,283,000
1853, 1854, 1855,	24,789,000	25,343,000

PUBLIC DEBT OF INDIA, 1834, TO 1853.

1834,	£35,463,483	1844,	£37,689,829
1835,	38,984,654	1845,	38,627,954
1836,	29,882,299	1846,	38,992,734
1837,	30,406,246	1847,	41,798,087
1838,	30,249,693	1848,	43,085,268
1839,	30,231,162	1849,	44,204,080
1840,	30,709,778	1850,	46,968,064
1841,	32,051,088	1851,	47,999,827
1842,	34,378,289	1852,	48,014,244
1843,	36,322,819	1853,	49,043,526

—MARTIN'S *British India*, p. 341; and *Parl. Deb.*, May 1856.

In 1860 the funded debt had mounted up to £71,901,081; and when to this the unfunded and floating debt is added, the whole amounts to £100,377,081.

RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE OF INDIA IN THE YEAR 1852.

Receipts.		Expenditure.	
Land-tax,	£15,365,000	Interest of debt,	£2,503,000
Stamps on land and spirits,	1,185,000	Dividends,	650,000
Opium monopoly,	5,088,000	Half-pay, &c., in England,	2,697,000
Customs,	1,430,000	Army,	9,803,000
Stamps,	491,000	Judicial establishments,	2,223,000
House-tax,	118,000	Collection of taxes,	2,010,000
Post-office,	200,000	Civil establishments,	1,928,000
Mint,	150,000	Costs of opium production,	1,370,000
Tobacco,	63,000	Salt-tax,	350,000
Tribute,	571,000	Marine taxes,	376,000
Miscellaneous,	1,522,000	Post-office,	213,000
		Custom-house costs,	189,000
		Mint do.,	60,000
		Stamps,	32,000
		Public works,	4,223,000
Total gross,	£28,610,000		£27,977,000

—MARTIN'S *British India*, p. 541.

Since the suppression of the revolt in 1859, the receipts and expenditure have become much more considerable. For the year 1860 the receipts were £42,903,234, while the expenditure was £46,924,619, leaving a deficit of £4,021,385. But this has now (1864) turned into a small surplus, which promises both to increase in extent and be permanent in character.

	1865. Rupees	1864. Rupees	Population.
† Native rude produce exported,	13,047,988	18,061,647	88,000,000
Manufactured do. do.,	11,849,670	4,502,362	100,000,000
	24,897,658	22,564,009	

The opium and indigo raised by English colonists, and with English capital, are in both cases excluded from the statement, which is meant to show the progress of native industry.

—MONTGOMERY MARTIN'S *British India*, 541.

The details of this extraordinary defalcation are still more instructive, for if the exports of cotton goods, shawls, indigo, and silk in 1825 are compared with those of 1835, there is a decline of 11,000,000 rupees (£1,100,000); and even taking into view the great increase of the export of opium to China, which was no less than 20,000,000 rupees (£2,000,000) in the period of comparison, there was a decline of the total exports of no less than 3,000,000 rupees, or £300,000.* In a word, the steam-engine of England has wellnigh destroyed the looms of India; and when we boast of the great growth of our export of manufactures to Hindostan, we forget the price at which that advantage has been purchased in the ruin of our distant and unrepresented Asiatic subjects.

23. The greater part of the revenue of the British Government in India is derived from the land-tax, levied in the whole province of Bengal under the zemindar system; in the northern provinces, and all the recent acquisitions, according to the old village system. There is a third system, called the Ryotwar, established in a large part of the presidency of Madras, comprising nearly a third of the Indian dominions. Under this system, a maximum is fixed for the rent of land, which is paid directly by the ryot or cultivator to the Government, he retaining all the surplus for his own advantage. Of course, everything here depends on the moderation with which the rent is originally fixed; for, once

imposed, it is in general rigorously exacted by the collectors, and often proves, in seasons of excessive drought, so oppressive as to land the cultivators in total ruin. The territorial revenues of the India Company did not increase so much as might have been expected, from the great additions which conquest and incorporation made to their dominions; they only rose from £13,431,000, on an average of three years ending in 1834, to £15,280,000 on a similar average ending in 1842, and to £21,347,000 in 1855. Considering that during this time the territorial surface of the British dominions has been augmented by 300,000 square miles, and its population by above 50,000,000 souls, this increase must be regarded as small, and indicating some essential defect still pervading our Indian administration.

24. The next considerable source of revenue which the late Company and present Imperial Government enjoys, is derived from monopolies, especially of opium and salt; the latter an odious and unjust mode of levying an income, but alleged to be the only resource left, as the land-tax has been everywhere raised to the highest level which the people can bear, and their habits render the imposition of indirect taxes impossible.† It is not of British introduction; the same necessity had led to its establishment under the native powers. It is a very productive impost: in 1840 it realised £1,450,000 in the province of Bengal alone; but

	1825 1826. Rupees.	1835-1836. Rupees.
* Cotton goods exported,	967,685	82,131
Shawls do.,	218,346	---
Indigo do.,	24,270,499	19,448,909
Silk do.,	15,670,509	11,034,047
	41,127,439	30,636,785
	or £5,900,000	or £3,800,000

—MONTGOMERY MARTIN'S *British India*.

† "On doit aux Anglais la conséquence forcée du malheureux arrangement par laquelle la majeure partie des terres a été affermée à perpétuité au-dessous de sa valeur, et par suite de laquelle l'Etat voit tarir la source la plus légitime des recettes nationales. Il est impossible, disent-ils, de suppléer à ce déficit par aucun impôt indirect; car, c'est un fait singulier, les fermiers se laisseront emprisonner, ruiner; les paysans se laisseront dépeupler de leur dernier sac de grain, réduire à la famine sans murmurer, tandis qu'on ne réclamera d'eux que la rente de la terre, parceque cette rente se trouve dans leurs idées reçues de temps immémorial. Mais si le Gouvernement essayait d'établir un impôt indirect nouveau, il éprouverait immédiatement une résistance armée. Le premier pas dans cette voie conduirait à la destruction."—WARREN, lii. 84, 85.

this advantage is dearly purchased by the extreme privations to which the high price of this article, which is one of necessity, reduces the poorer class of cultivators. The profit derived from the monopoly of opium is still more considerable; it had become, before the Chinese war broke out, no less than £2,000,000 sterling, being 50 per cent on £4,000,000, the exported value of that precious drug sent to Canton alone.* These form the chief items of Indian revenue; for the custom-house duties are very inconsiderable, owing partly to the impossibility of rendering such taxes productive in India, partly to the interested legislation of Great Britain, which insisted, until quite recently, on admitting British manufactures at a merely nominal duty of 2 or 3 per cent into all the British possessions in the East.

25. The British empire in India is essentially a military power: it was won by the sword, and must be kept by the sword. The military establishment, therefore, is a matter of vital

importance to its existence; and the greatest dangers it has ever encountered have arisen from the hasty and ill-considered adoption by its government of the economical maxims which, during the peace, were so much in vogue in Great Britain. It has undergone great changes at different times; and the fortune of war, as will immediately appear, underwent a similar mutation. In 1826, immediately after the termination of the first Burmese war, it was stated by Lord Hardinge in Parliament to amount to 302,700 men, of whom 45,000 were British, and 258,000 natives.† This immense force, however, underwent a great diminution, and in 1837 it consisted only of 186,000 men, of whom 30,000 were Europeans. This reduction, which continued for some years, occasioned a considerable diminution of expenditure, and enabled the Government, as already noticed, to accumulate a reserve treasure, before the commencement of the Afghanistan and Chinese wars, of £10,000,000. But

The progress of the opium trade to China has been very remarkable since its first introduction in 1817:—

	Value of Opium exported.		Value of Opium exported
1817,	£737,775	1826,	2,445,629
1819,	1,098,250	1827,	2,810,870
1820,	1,116,000	1839,	4,000,000

† The exact numbers, without deducting the sick and non-effective, were:—

English (King's) troops,	21,934
English (Company's) troops,	3,600
English Artillery (Company's),	15,782
Engineers,	4,576

Total English,	45,891
Native irregular horse,	26,024
Infantry,	230,842

802,827c

H. HARDINGE'S *Statements*, March 18, 1838; *Parl. Deb.*

354 the Land Forces, Native and European, stood thus:—

	European Officers.	European Rank and File.	Native Officers and Rank and File.	Total.
Queen's	896	25,930	..	26,826
Company, English,	588	14,001	..	14,649
Do. Natives,	3,644	3,122	233,699	240,465
Subsidiary,	5,128	43,113	233,699	281,940
Police,	86	86	30,882	31,104
	35	..	24,015	24,050
	5,249	43,149	288,596	336,994

—*Commons' Return*, 17th April 1855.

it brought the empire to the very verge of destruction, both by the internal discontent which it occasioned and the external disasters which it induced. To carry on those gigantic conflicts, the army was again raised to 267,000 men, of whom no less than 47,000 were native British, either royal troops or in the service of the Company.* But though the English soldiers were admirable, the new battalions of sepoys were far from being equally efficient. Brought into action, and exposed to the most serious hardships and dangers, without having acquired the steadiness or confidence in their officers of old soldiers, they were far from sustaining their ancient reputation in the wars which ensued; and their frequent failures brought the empire into the most serious dangers, and added another to the innumerable proofs which history affords, that of all economy, in a military state, the most costly is that which diminishes the ranks of its old soldiers.† It has now come to be generally understood that the strength of our army in India mainly depends upon the proportion of Europeans who are employed in it; and between the Queen's troops and those in the service of the Company they amounted, before the great revolt of the native army in 1857, to nearly

50,000—about *a fifth* of the native troops.

26. Great as this military establishment was, it was by no means disproportioned to the necessities or resources of India. A force of 280,000 men, of whom 49,000 were English soldiers, could not be considered as excessive for a country of such vast extent, inhabited by 175,000,000 people, many of them of a warlike character, and all accustomed to internal feuds and warfare. In fact, it is nothing to the proportion of armed men to the whole population in the military monarchies of Europe; for it is only 1 soldier to every 500 inhabitants; whereas in France the proportion is 1 to 70, in Austria 1 to 72, in Russia 1 to 60, in Prussia 1 to 56. In most of the old civilised countries of Europe, the proportion of the soldiers to the inhabitants is nearly ten times that which obtained in India. The garrison in and around Paris, in a period of the most profound peace, exceeds the whole European troops in India. Now the proportion of native to European troops is much changed. In 1863 there were 75,000 Europeans to 141,000 natives. When it is recollected that India was won by the sword, and must be retained by it, its military establishment, so far from being regarded as excessive, must be considered as very moderate,

* MILITARY FORCE OF INDIA, NATIVE AND EUROPEAN, FROM 1817 TO 1851.

Years.	Native.	European.	Total.	Years.	Native.	European.	Total.
1817	195,434	81,056	226,190	1835	152,938	80,822	183,760
1818	211,079	32,163	243,240	1836	153,306	32,783	186,039
1819	215,878	29,494	245,272	1837	154,029	32,502	186,531
1820	228,620	28,645	257,265	1838	153,780	31,526	185,306
1821	228,068	28,914	256,982	1839	176,008	31,132	207,140
1822	216,175	29,065	245,240	1840	199,839	35,604	235,403
1823	206,709	30,933	237,732	1841	212,616	33,406	251,022
1824	212,842	30,585	243,427	1842	212,624	42,118	254,737
1825	246,125	30,423	276,545	1843	220,967	46,726	267,673
1826	260,273	30,872	291,145	1844	216,580	46,240	262,820
1827	240,942	32,678	240,942	1845	240,310	46,111	286,411
1828	224,471	34,557	259,028	1846	240,733	44,014	284,747
1829	207,662	35,786	243,448	1847	247,743	44,823	291,796
1830	187,167	36,409	223,476	1848	220,891	44,270	265,161
1831	161,987	35,011	196,998	1849	229,130	47,893	277,023
1832	158,201	34,767	192,698	1850	228,448	49,280	277,728
1833	156,331	33,735	190,116	1851	240,121	49,408	289,529
1834	155,554	32,310	187,816				

† The war expenses in India alone, independent of China, amounted in 1842 to £14,000,000 sterling.—WARREN, iii. 195.

or rather surprisingly small, and certainly not a third of what it was when the whole country was in the hands of jarring and independent native powers.

27. It is recorded by Arrian, that, after his conquest of Persia, Alexander the Great formed corps of united Asiatic and European troops, which were invariably blended in the proportion of two of the former to one of the latter. After the battles of Delhi and Laswaree, Lord Lake wrote to the Directors of the East India Company that success could not be relied on in Indian warfare if the proportion of British to native troops was less than 1 to 6.* Lord Clive said that "the empire of India would rest with the power which could bring into the field the greatest number of *European* troops." The opinions of these great Asiatic conquerors deserve all attention, and should never be absent from the thoughts of those to whom, directly or indirectly, the direction of our Indian empire is intrusted. Whether it is from difference of constitutional energy, or the debilitating effect of a warm climate, or the successive oppression of hordes of Tartar conquerors, from which, owing to their greater distance from Central Asia, the states of Europe have been exempt, it is now perfectly ascertained that the native soldiers of India, whether Hindoos or Mussulmans, are far from being equal to the Europeans. Unless supported by an adequate num-

* "I cannot avoid saying, in the most confidential manner, that in the event of a foreign foe coming into this country, without a *very great addition of men in Europeans*, the consequences will be fatal, as there ought always to be at least one European battalion to four native ones. This I think necessary. I have seen a great deal of these people lately, and am quite convinced that *without king's troops very little is to be expected*. In short, the infantry of this army, as well as the cavalry, should be remodelled." — *Secret Despatches*, LORD LAKE to LORD WELLESLEY, September 12, 1803 (the day after the victory of Delhi); WELLESLEY'S *Despatches*, iii. 312. "If they do not in England think it necessary to send British troops in the proportion of one to three sepoy regiments—which is, in fact, one to six in actual numbers, from the superior strength of the native battalions—they will stand a good chance of losing India if a French force once gets a footing there." — LORD LAKE to LORD WELLESLEY, October 10, 1803 (the day after the battle of Agra), *ibid.* iii. 396.

ber of British troops, and led by British officers, no reliance can be placed on their steadiness in the day of battle. Occasionally they fight most gallantly, and instances have even occurred where they have confronted dangers from which British recoiled. But these are the exceptions, not the rule. Generally speaking, they will not bear a comparison with English soldiers, and, unless well supported, are almost sure to melt away under the first severe fire. This is a painful admission to make, for the native troops have many most valuable qualities, and without their aid our Indian empire could not be maintained for an hour. But it is better to be aware of the truth than to have it burst unawares; and by being sensible what they can do, and what not, disappointment is less likely to ensue, and the disaster consequent on misapprehension more likely to be avoided.* The Indian army is very expensive, for the pay and allowances of the troops, both native and European, are on the most liberal scale; and the heat of the climate is such that much which in Europe would savour of luxury is there a matter of absolute necessity. It has been so, for the same reason, from the earliest ages, and will be so to the end of time. Punkahs to keep the air cool, regimental libraries to divert the soldiers, large barracks, comfortable bedding, and cold baths, are provided in most of the stations for the European soldiers. The enlistment of the sepoy is for fifteen years; no bounty is paid, and conscription is unknown, the service being so popular that there are commonly several candidates for each vacant situation. These accommodations, so different from the utter penury of their native dwellings, insure the popularity of the army as a profession, but they immensely increase the expense with which it is attended, and greatly encumber military operations. For the proportion of camp-followers to fighting men is seldom less

* This was completely proved in the revolt of 1857, when less than 40,000 English soldiers, with the aid of the Sikhs, conquered the whole sepoy army in Bengal, above 120,000 strong.

than three to one—so that for an army of 30,000 soldiers provision must be made, for feeding or moving, for 120,000 mouths.

28. The system which should be pursued in a distant military empire such as that of India is abundantly plain. It is that which gave and so long retained in the hands of the Romans the empire of the world. It must be founded on military strength; the prestige of victory, the moral influence of irresistible strength, must play around its bayonets. The British Government there must always be considered as reposing in presence of a hostile population, which will take advantage of the first serious reverse to avenge upon it the loss of its independence. Any considerable reduction of military force, and, above all, *large disbanding of old soldiers*, must be regarded as in the highest degree dangerous. But, on the other hand, the maintenance of such a large military establishment is very expensive; it will soon be felt as burdensome, and, if not compensated by other advantages, it may become impossible to keep it up. The only way in which it is possible to combine these different objects is to maintain a powerful standing army, such as may at any moment be adequate to any emergency, but to accompany this with liberal grants for the encouragement of industry and the improvement of the country, and the most entirely just and even indulgent system of commercial intercourse. It is at all times an easy matter in India to procure a supply of native soldiers to any amount by voluntary enlistment, for the pay of a common soldier is more than double

that of a common labourer; the real difficulty is to find funds to pay the large establishment which is requisite to preserve the command of the country. This is only to be done by liberal grants of public money to restore the aqueous communications of its fields, and the most enlarged and indulgent commercial policy, such as may give the inhabitants at once the means of paying the imposts, and secure their attachment to the Government which imposes them. Lord Dalhousie's administration afforded a brilliant example of the first, Sir R. Peel's tariff of 1842 was the commencement of the second, and both have been largely acted upon in subsequent times.

29. The JUDICIAL ESTABLISHMENT of India is on a large scale, and undoubtedly is a very great improvement on the courts of the native princes. Justice is administered in cases of small value in the native courts, from the decisions of which there is an appeal to a higher court, either native or European, at the option of the appellant. The native and European are put on the same level in these courts; but there is an appeal from them both to superior courts, of which that of the Sudder-Adawlut at Calcutta is the highest, from which, in cases above £1000, there is an appeal to the Queen in council. The proportion of reversals to adherences, though considerably greater than is usual in European courts, is not more than might be expected, considering that the law to be applied is a strange medley of Hindoo, Mohammedan, and British institutions.* It speaks volumes as to the integrity of British administra-

* SUITS DECIDED IN NATIVE COURTS, APPEALS, AND PROPORTION OF REVERSALS, FROM 1843 TO 1849.

Years.	Average Suits decided by Native Judges.	Appeals—to European Judges.	Appeals—to Native Judges.	Reversals.	Proportion of Reversals to Suits.
					Per cent.
1843	39,181	4505	3083	2301	5½
1844	40,213	4397	2902	2020	5
1845	40,579	3980	2809	1895	4½
1846	41,775	3901	2392	1676	4
1847	43,169	3603	2559	1673	3½
1848	41,340	3977	2916	1736	4
1849	44,933	3802	3670	2402	4½

tion, and the confidence of the natives in it.

30. One circumstance is very remarkable in India, and without a proper understanding of the causes to which it is owing, it would appear altogether inexplicable. This is the miserable condition and rapid decline of the *protected states*, which is invariable, and ere long becomes so excessive that they become incapable of supporting themselves, and, as a matter of necessity, are absorbed by the all-conquering power. The offer of the protection of the British Government presents almost irresistible temptations to an Indian potentate. The basis of it is the conclusion of an alliance offensive and defensive, which secures to the weaker state the guarantee of the stronger, and is accompanied only, in the first instance, by the requisition of supplies and pay for two or three battalions stationed as a subsidiary force in the capital of the protected state. So far nothing can appear more advantageous, and the smaller states are too happy in general to secure theegis of a power capable alike of shielding them from insult and protecting them from injury. But all this notwithstanding, independence is the first of national as of individual blessings; and so it is soon found, alike by nations and private persons who have lost it. Ere long the evils of dependence, the bitterness of protection, are experienced. All persons, whether in power or subject to authority, come to be convinced by a little experience that the state of weakness and thralldom in which the government is placed cannot long continue, and that things are only arranged for a time. A feeling of insecurity, a conviction of brevity of existence, comes to pervade all classes; and when once this idea has taken possession of a nation, unbounded calamities await them all. The tax-collectors exact the last farthing from the cultivators, from a conviction that every season may be their last; the Government are equally rigorous with the collectors, from the effects of the same belief. Expendi-

ture on public works or private undertakings there is little or none—hoarding, on the contrary, generally prevails; for every one is looking for the advent of the period, too certainly approaching, when the protecting Government will at once take possession of the state, and an entire new set of functionaries will be established. Under the effects of this belief, cultivation and production rapidly decline; this only renders the condition of those who still carry it on more distressing, for they can look for no indulgence from the collectors. At length matters come to such a point that the revenue in great part fails; the troops, as the only means of keeping them quiet, are quartered upon the inhabitants; and in the end, often with the cordial approbation of all classes, the protected state is incorporated with its protector; and under a reduced rent, and greater regularity of administration, the people hope at least that they have entered upon a better order of things.

31. There is no country in which the want of an extensive paper circulation is more strongly felt than in India, for there is none in which the capacity of the people for industry is more fettered by the want of adequate capital to carry it on. Previous to its conquest by the English, such was the distracted state of the whole peninsula, that wealth was generally hoarded instead of being spent; and it was the propensity to do this which caused the incessant drain of the precious metals to the East which has been observed from the earliest period of commercial history. Since it has fallen under British dominion, the annual abstraction of capital to this country has caused India to be constantly destitute of the wealth requisite to put in motion its industry, especially in a land where a great outlay for the purposes of internal communication or irrigation is essential to its first efforts. To a country so situated, an extensive paper circulation, founded on a secure basis, would be the first of blessings; what the want of it it has proved, may be judged of

by what in America its presence has occasioned. Yet, strange to say, there are very few Banks in India, and such as exist have been established within a very recent period.* They are only twelve in number, and their notes in circulation amount only to the trifling sum of £3,700,000, being not 3d. a-head to each inhabitant; whereas in Great Britain the proportion is £1, 8s., and in the United States of America £1, 18s. Nothing more is required to explain the stationary condition of industry in great part of India, or the extreme difficulty experienced of making the revenue keep pace with the necessities of the Government.

32. This consideration is of vital importance, not merely to the inhabitants of India, but to the monetary interests of the British empire. Since the heavy import-duties on Indian produce have been lowered by Sir R. Peel's tariff, Great Britain has experienced the usual fate of a rich and

prosperous in connection with a comparatively poor and uncultivated country—that of being able to consume more than the state from which it imports the objects of consumption. The result of this is, that an extended commercial intercourse between the two soon runs into a huge balance of imports over exports, which requires to be adjusted by a great export of gold and silver to the poor agricultural state. That its inhabitants are always glad to take to any amount; but articles of manufacture are only taken off to a considerable extent when comfort has been long enjoyed, and artificial wants acquired among them. This effect has already taken place to such an extent, since the commercial intercourse with India has become so considerable, that the balance paid by Great Britain in specie has come (1864) to exceed £6,000,000 annually, and in 1856 amounted to nearly £7,000,000;† a severe drain upon her

* BANKS IN INDIA, WITH THE DATE OF THEIR ESTABLISHMENT, THEIR CAPITAL, AND NOTES IN CIRCULATION, AND BILLS UNDER DISCOUNT.

Banks.	Date of Establishment.	Capital paid up.	Notes in Circulation.	Bills under Discount.
1. Bank of Bengal, . . .	1809	£1,070,000	£1,714,771	£125,251
2. „ Madras, . . .	1843	300,000	123,719	59,871
3. „ Bombay, . . .	1846	522,500	571,089	195,836
4. Oriental Bank, . . .	1851	1,215,000	199,279	2,918,399
5. Agra do., . . .	1833	700,000	..	..
6. North-West do., . . .	1844	220,000	..	..
7. London and Eastern do.,	1854	250,000	325,000	..
8. Commercial do., . . .	1845	456,000	..	..
9. Delhi do., . . .	1844	180,000	..	..
10. Simla do., . . .	1844	63,850	..	..
11. Dacca do., . . .	1846	..	..	..
12. Mercantile do., . . .	1846	328,826	777,156	109,547
		£5,906,176	£3,711,314	£3,408,904

—MONTGOMERY MARTIN; Appendix, xii.

† Colonel Sykes, whose intimate acquaintance with Indian affairs is well known, has unfolded the extent of this danger in a very interesting paper published in the *Statistical Journal*. The results of his researches, which were very numerous and elaborate, are thus given:—

Years ending 30th April.	Imports of India, including Bullion.	Exports.	Import of Bullion.	Excess of Exports, deducting Bullion.	Final Balances in favour of India.
1849-50	£10,300,000	£17,312,000	£2,425,000	£4,587,000	£1,651,000
1850-51	11,559,000	18,164,000	3,270,000	3,335,000	99,000
1851-52	12,240,000	19,879,000	4,138,000	3,506,000	229,000
1852-53	10,071,000	20,465,000	5,776,000	4,618,000	1,301,000
1853-54	11,122,000	19,295,000	3,389,000	4,784,000	934,000
	£55,292,000	£95,115,000	£18,993,000	£20,830,000	£4,713,000

—*Statistical Journal*, June 1856, p. 126.

metallic resources at any time, but which, in the event of its coinciding with a foreign war, or bad harvest in Great Britain, may at once induce a monetary crisis of the severest kind. In point of fact, it largely contributed, with the necessities of the war in the Levant, to the fearful run upon the Bank in the end of 1855 and first four months of 1856, which reduced its stock of bullion to £9,875,000, and would have rendered a suspension of cash payments unavoidable, but for the supplies from Australia and the termination of the war. A large extension of the paper circulation of India, therefore, is loudly required, not merely to carry through its great and growing public works, and sustain the industry of its inhabitants, but to lessen the perpetual danger, under our present commercial and monetary systems, of a serious crisis in the mother country.

33. To narrate the successive steps by which this great empire has been formed since the period when Lord Wellesley sheathed the sword of conquest and retired from India in 1806, after having added so much to the fame and the dominions of the English in it, would require a separate work not less voluminous and detailed than the present, and few historical compositions will be able to boast of a wider or a nobler field of narrative and description. A brief analysis of this splendid subject can alone be here attempted, which may perhaps, from the interest of the matter involved, tempt other readers to adventure upon it, and lead, in the hands of another, to a work second to none in modern Europe in interest and importance.

34. Lord Wellesley's administration was based on that clear perception of the perils which at that period environed our Indian empire, and that resolution in facing them which form the characteristics of a great statesman. It was attended, accordingly, with the success which it deserved; but that very success, as is often the case, proved fatal to its author. The East India

Directors at home were far from being as thoroughly impressed as their able and intrepid viceroy with the necessity of "conquest to existence," as real to the British in India as it had been to Napoleon in Europe. They deemed, on the contrary, the career of conquest just concluded as not only extremely expensive in the outset, but eminently dangerous in the end, and therefore the instructions given to the new Governor-General were of the most positive kind to conciliate rather than overawe, and, above all things, reduce the public expenditure within the limits of the income. Lord Cornwallis, who was now advanced in years, was compelled to yield to these urgent representations, and set himself in good earnest to carry them into execution. In pursuance of this system, Scindia and Holkar were gratified, not merely by the surrender of part of dearly-purchased conquests, but by the renunciation of the alliance with the Rajpoot and other states which had taken part against the ambitious Maharrattas in the late crisis.

35. This discreditable treaty proved to the last degree prejudicial to British interests in India. Scindia had permitted the English Residency to be attacked and plundered by a body of Pindarrees, and had himself detained the Resident, Mr Jenkins; but no reparation was demanded for this outrage. The territories of Holkar had been solemnly promised as the reward of conquest, to the allied states, but they were all restored to the defeated chief. Not content with this, the English gave up the strong fortress of Gwalior and territory of Gohud, which they had promised to include in the protected states, to Scindia; "an act," as the Governor-General wrote to the Directors, "*entirely gratuitous* on our part." The rajahs and lesser powers on the other side of the Jumna, who had been in alliance with England during the war, were all abandoned, notwithstanding the strongest remonstrances on the part of Lord Lake, who contended that the bare "taking such a proposition into consideration would be considered as a prelude to their be-

ing sacrificed to obtaining a peace with the Mahrattas." In a word, the Mahrattas, at the conclusion of a war to them eminently disastrous, obtained all the advantages which could have been expected from a series of successful campaigns; and the English, as the result of their brilliant victories, were content to submit to a peace to them ignominious, and extremely prejudicial to their moral influence in the East. Such a result, by no means uncommon in British history, was not the result of incapacity in our diplomatists, as compared to our generals; it was owing to a much more general cause, and that is, the reluctance of a government essentially mercantile in its principles and structure to submit to the pecuniary sacrifices requisite to bring even a successful war to a lasting glorious termination.

36. Although Lord Cornwallis had conducted the leading articles of this treaty, he did not live to complete it. He expired at Ghazipoor, near Benares, on 5th October 1805, in the sixty-sixth year of his age. Sir George Barlow, the senior member of Council, succeeded to the practical duties of government, and continued the system of concession so strongly impressed upon his predecessor by the Directors and Board of Control. Holkar and Scindia made no attempt to disguise their astonishment at the concessions thus voluntarily made to them by their victorious enemy; and Lord Lake, who was the diplomatic agent who conducted the negotiation, was so dissatisfied at the turn which it had taken, and the utter disregard shown to his remonstrances, that he resigned his diplomatic powers, and returned home, leaving a name which will ever stand forth with brilliancy in Indian annals. He did not long survive his restoration to his native country, but died in England on 21st February 1808, at the age of sixty-four. The Mahratta peace was signed on July 6, 1806. During Lord Wellesley's administration, the revenues of the English Government were raised from £8,059,000 to £15,403,000; and although the expenditure, at the close

of the war, exceeded the income by about £2,000,000, yet this was a temporary deficit, only occasioned by the magnitude of the war charges; and Sir George Barlow held out the prospect of a permanent surplus of £2,000,000 when the forces were reduced to their peace establishment.

37. Before peace had lasted any considerable time, events occurred which forcibly reminded the English Govern-

which their dominion in India was held. Sir George Barlow's provisional government terminated in July 1807, but before its expiry an outbreak of the most dangerous character had occurred at Vellore. The origin of this most dangerous mutiny was a most absurd and injudicious attempt made by Sir John Cradock and the military authorities at Madras, without the knowledge of Lord William Bentinck, the governor of that presidency, to force the sepoys to wear turbans in the form of a hat, and have their chins shaved, without the distinguishing mark of caste, when on parade. With such rigour was this senseless regulation enforced, that nine hundred lashes were inflicted on two grenadiers who refused to obey it. The greatest discontent was excited by these proceedings; but so deeply was the conviction of the passive character of the Hindoos rooted in the British in India, that it excited very little attention, until it led to a most formidable mutiny at Vellore, on 10th July. The European part of the garrison, consisting of two companies of the 69th regiment, which was not a tenth part of the natives, was there attacked by the sepoys so suddenly, and with such fury, that Colonel Fancourt and one hundred and twelve Europeans perished in the first onset before any succour could be obtained. No sooner did the disastrous tidings reach Colonel Gillespie, who lay at Arcot, about sixteen miles distant, than he instantly sounded to horse, and, proceeding, at the head of the 19th dragoons, with some guns and native cavalry, at a rapid pace to the insurgent fortress, blew open the gate with his guns, and forced his way in at the

sword's point. Then was seen how vain are all attempts on the part of the Hindoos, when led by their native officers, to resist European energy and daring. After a short conflict the mutineers were routed; the bloody sabres of the English dragoons pursued them through all the streets; three hundred and fifty were slain, and the rest made prisoners. Five hundred of these were sentenced to various periods of imprisonment and banishment, and the remainder pardoned. Thus was this most dangerous mutiny quelled in blood; the captive insurgents were gradually set at liberty; the cheerful obedience of the men, and their customary attachment to those whose salt they eat, returned, and the British officers "ceased to sleep with pistols under their pillows." Sir John Cradock and Lord William Bentinck were both recalled in consequence of this event. Sir George Barlow's provisional government came to an end, and Lord Minto was sent out as Governor-General, and arrived in India in 1807.

38. Lord Minto's administration, which lasted till 1813, was not distinguished by any serious wars; but he was far from pursuing the policy in neglecting native alliances which had distinguished Sir George Barlow's government. Some misunderstandings, which threatened serious ruptures, ensued with some of the native princes; but they were appeased by a mere demonstration of British force, until RUNJEET SINGH, the far-famed chief of Lahore, made an attack on some of the petty chiefs to the south of the Sutlej. To arrest this aggression, they were declared under British protection; and the ambitious rajah, unwilling to provoke a contest with so formidable a power, concluded a treaty with the Company, by which he engaged only to maintain a limited force on the Sutlej; while GENERAL OCHTERLONY was stationed at Loodiana on the southern side of the river. The attention of the Indian Government was mainly occupied during Lord Minto's administration by the war with France; the Mauritius, the Isle of Bourbon, and the Moluccas, were conquered by

the force which he equipped in India in 1810; Java and its dependencies were wrested from the French and Dutch by the Governor-General in person in 1811. The latter of these valuable acquisitions was, with imprudent generosity, restored by the British to the Dutch Government, on occasion of the general pacification in 1815. These important events, which properly belong to the great war between England and France at that period, are fully narrated in a former work by the author.* Before Lord Minto's government, however, came to an end, it was found impossible to maintain any longer the non-intervention policy: and the seizure of Bhootwal, a border district, by the GHOORKAS, a hill tribe, who by fraud and violence had extended themselves over a frontier of seven hundred miles in the lower regions of the Himalaya, led to an angry negotiation with the government of that enterprising race, which was not terminated when Lord Minto's administration came to an end in October 1813.

39. The EARL OF MOIRA reached Calcutta in October 1813, and in the following month received the tardy reply of the Nepaulese Government to the British proposals for a settlement, which, though conciliatory in appearance, was unsatisfactory in substance. This Lord Moira, a gallant soldier of chivalrous feelings and Plantagenet descent, whose ancient manor of Donnington had sheltered the Bourbons in their distress, was by no means inclined to submit to. Accordingly he demanded, in a peremptory manner, reparation for an outrage committed by these bold mountaineers on the British station at Bhootwal, in which an English officer had been barbarously murdered, and his detachment of twenty-four men slain. As the Ghoorka Government refused to make either apology or compensation, Lord Moira declared war against them in November 1814, and four armies were immediately formed for invasion of their territories. The first was commanded by General Marley, and consisted of

* *History of Europe*, c. lxiv. § 131.

8000 men destined to act directly against Katmandoo, by the route of Mukwanpoor, the three others of 4500, 3500, and 6000 men, respectively commanded by Generals Wood and Gillespie, and Colonel (afterwards General) Ochterlony, were ordered to attack other portions of the long hostile frontier. Wood was to operate from Goruckpoor, across the Terrai upon Botwul and Palpa; further to the westward, Gillespie was to advance from Seharunpoor into the valley of Deyra Dhoon, lying in the hills between the Jumna and the Ganges, and to secure the passes by which these rivers quit the high grounds; while, still farther to the westward, Ochterlony, setting out from Boopoor, was to penetrate into the mountains where the Sutlej and its tributaries come foaming down into the plain.

40. The GHOORKAS, who were thus for the first time brought into collision with the British Government, and who bore a distinguished part in the war which followed, are a mountain tribe, of chivalrous manners and uncommon valour, who had by their superior courage and conduct obtained the dominion to a great extent over the valleys which border on the plains of Hindostan. The British here met "foemen worthy of their steel." In the mountains of Nepaul they encountered a body of warriors whose courage, vigour, and resolution caused them to experience the most stubborn resistance, and on many occasions made even British troops to recoil. Simple in their habits—addicted, like most highland tribes, rather to plunder than industry—they are yet faithful to their word, hospitable to strangers, courteous to enemies. The venality and falsehood which prevail so extensively in the plains of Hindostan, they hold in utter abhorrence. If the English seldom encountered enemies of greater prowess, they never, when the contest was over, experienced such chivalrous courtesy from their opponents; and since these rude mountaineers have been taken into their own service, they have never been served by braver or more faithful soldiers.

41. For the first time in Indian history the British experienced in this war the sturdy resistance of the Asiatic mountaineers. The early operations of the war were unsuccessful, and betokened but too clearly the difficulties with which it was to be attended. The campaign opened with the advance of General Gillespie into the Deyra Dhoon, where he laid siege to a hill-fort named Kalunga, in one of the first valleys of the mountains; which the English, according to custom, expected to carry by a *coup-de-main*; but they were repulsed, and Gillespie, who commanded the assault in person, while waving his hat to cheer on the troops, was shot through the heart. This check rendered it necessary to commence operations in form; and the siege was suspended till the arrival of the battering-train from Delhi; but even when a breach had been made, the troops, dispirited by their former repulse, could not be induced to storm it; and it was only by the tedious operation of shelling-out the garrison that the fort was at length (November 30) evacuated. In the interior of the fort was found a mingled mass of dead bodies and wounded men and women, mutilated and dying of thirst; a fearful proof of the determination with which the defence had been maintained. This unexpected and heroic resistance made a great impression on the British leaders, and, combined with the novel and difficult nature of the country in which the war required to be carried on, inspired a degree of vacillation in their councils singularly at variance with their wonted audacious bearing. General Martindell, who succeeded to the command of Gillespie's column, advanced to Nahun, which he found evacuated, and thence to the strong hill-fort of Jythuk. But here his progress was arrested; and though he held his ground before it, he was unable to make any way in its reduction. Meanwhile, General Wood had totally failed in his attempt to occupy Botwul; and General Marley did not venture, even seriously, to assail the passes in his front.

42. In this emergency, victory was

restored to the British arms by a chief who to the soul of a hero united the eye of a general. General Ochterlony had studied the Ghoorka mode of fighting, and scanned the causes to which the difficulties of the war had been owing. He met them with their own weapons, erecting stockaded forts—a species of warfare hitherto unknown in India—and taking the utmost precaution, by making roads through the jungles and mountains, and alliances with the native chiefs, to secure his rear and communications before he penetrated far into the country. Ere long the effects of this judicious conduct appeared; gradually the British general forced the Nepaulese to retreat; Nalagerh was taken, after a series of very protracted and intricate operations; Ramgurh and other hill-forts were evacuated (11th February 1815) by them; and at length Umur Singh, their greatest chief, was obliged to take post with all his force in the strong position of Maloun. The stone fort thus named, with that of Sourajgurh, formed the two extremities, each situated on a lofty peak, of a line of fortified posts, erected on a long and rocky ridge projecting from the hills into the country watered by the Sutlej. Of the intervening peaks, all were occupied and fortified by stockades except two, the Ryla and the Deothul. Perceiving the omission, Ochterlony rapidly advanced (April 15), and seized these two important points in the very centre of the enemy's line, the first without resistance, the second after a sanguinary conflict, in which the native troops greatly distinguished themselves. Sensible of the necessity of dislodging the British from this position, the Ghoorka chiefs commenced a furious attack on it in the following morning with the flower of their force. Happily Ochterlony had spent the preceding night in strengthening the post with stockades, and planting some guns upon it. Notwithstanding this advantage, the enemy came on with such fury that they penetrated at several points into the intrenchments, and Bhurti Singh, a renowned leader, was bayoneted within

the works. The contest was long and bloody; but at length the opportune arrival of a reinforcement with ammunition from the peak of Ryla, enabled the British to repulse the enemy, and in their turn to become assailants. The Ghoorkas were in the end defeated; and this was followed by the abandonment of the whole position, and concentration of their force in the fortress of Maloun, against which batteries were raised in the first week of May. After the battle, the Ghoorkas, who had shown the utmost courage in the strife, evinced a noble confidence in the courtesy of the British leaders, by sending to ask for the body of Bhurti Singh, who had been slain, and was in their hands. General Ochterlony immediately complied with the request, and sent the gory corpse wrapped in rich shawls, in token of his admiration for the valour of the fallen chief. His two widows burnt themselves next day on the funeral-pile, in compliance with his last injunctions.

43. Meanwhile Lord Moira had been actively engaged in organising forces, which commenced active operations on the side of Rohilcund, where the depredations of the Ghoorkas had excited the utmost animosity. The first of these auxiliary corps, under Captain Hearsey, was attacked and dispersed by the enemy; but the second, under Colonel Gardner, obtained brilliant success, penetrated into the centre of the province of Kumaon, and on being reinforced by 2000 regular troops under Colonel Nicolls, who assumed the chief command, so straitened the governor in Almora, its capital, that, after seeing the Sctola heights, distant from it only seventy yards, stormed (April 25), he was obliged to enter into a capitulation, by which he agreed to evacuate the whole province. The intelligence of this success at Almora greatly facilitated the operations against Maloun. The old chief, Umur Singh, held out obstinately within its wall in hopes that the rainy season, which was rapidly approaching, would compel the British to raise the siege. But in this he was disappointed; the trenches, though half filled with water,

were still held by resolute defenders ; the majority of the garrison came over to the British camp as prisoners of war ; and at length Umur Singh, whose still remaining adherents were reduced to two hundred and fifty men, was compelled to sue for peace. This was (15th May) granted, but on the most humiliating terms ; Maloun was ceded, with the whole territory from Kumaon westward to the Sutlej ; including Jythuk. Thus was a war which, in the beginning of the year, promised nothing but disaster, gloriously concluded before midsummer ; and the whole hill-country from the Kalee to the Sutlej—a district hitherto deemed impenetrable to Europeans—was annexed to the British dominions. It added to the satisfaction produced by these triumphs, that they were mainly won by the native forces ; for General Ochterlony's division, by whom they were chiefly achieved, was entirely composed of that force. He was ably seconded, however, by his European officers, especially Lieutenant Lawtie, field engineer, who died, deeply regretted, of excessive fatigue before Maloun. General Ochterlony was made a baronet, with a pension of a £1000 a-year, in acknowledgment of his services ; and Earl Moira was advanced to the dignity of Marquess of Hastings.

44. But the Ghoorkas, though defeated, were not subdued. Negotiations for a final treaty went on, which in some degree differed from those at first concluded with Umur Singh. The district called the Dhoon and the province of Kumaon were retained, and incorporated with the British dominions ; but the remaining territory, which had been originally conquered by Umur Singh, was proposed to be restored to the chiefs from whom it had been wrested, and taken under British protection. The Ghoorka chiefs, however, refused to accede to these terms, and in particular peremptorily rejected the proposed stationing of a British resident in their capital. The result was, that hostilities were renewed in January 1816, and Sir David Ochter-

lony advanced (9th February) at the head of a powerful force of seventeen thousand men, including three European regiments, against the Nepaulese capital. All the usual passes leading from the first range of hills into the beautiful valley in which it is situated, had been carefully fortified by the enemy, and it was on the strength of these intrenchments that their whole reliance was placed. But Ochterlony received information of a deep and narrow ravine leading through the Cheereah Gautie mountains, which had been neglected as being deemed impracticable, and by it he succeeded in penetrating into the country, and taking the whole Ghoorka intrenchments in rear. Advancing rapidly, the British general penetrated into the beautiful upland valley beyond, and was moving on Mukwanpoor, when the enemy, seeing the necessity of fighting a general action if they would avert the capture of their capital, gave battle in the plain. The result was, that they were totally defeated, and submission was immediately made. The rejected treaty was signed, and sealed with the royal red seal, and a duly qualified envoy presented it on his knees to Ochterlony in presence of all the chiefs of the camp.

45. The inauspicious commencement of the Ghoorka war led, as similar disasters always have done in the modern history of India, to an incipient combination of the native chiefs against the British power. Scindia, who deemed himself strong enough now to measure swords with it alone, was the soul of the confederacy ; but the chief reliance of the confederates was on the PINDARREES, a body of horsemen assembled from all parts of India, who had, during the concentration of the British forces to make head against the Ghoorkas, drawn together, and committed the most dreadful outrages in the British dominions. These formidable bands of robbers, who had arisen "like masses of corruption out of the putrefaction of weak and expiring states," had multiplied, as the terrible "English bands" did after the rout of

Azincour, and from the same causes, in several of the richest and most fertile parts of India. Located to the north of the Nerbudda, it was their practice, as soon as that river became fordable in November, to cross it and plunder alike friends and foes. During the year 1816, a band of these inhuman freebooters remained twelve days within the British frontier, during which they burnt or plundered 339 villages, put 182 persons to a cruel death, severely wounded 505, and subjected 3603 others to various kinds of torture. Twenty-five women, during these outrages, drowned themselves to avoid violation. The usual modes of torture adopted by these barbarians were putting heavy stones on the head or chest, placing red-hot irons on the soles of the feet, tying the head in a bag filled with hot ashes, throwing oil on the clothes and then setting fire to them, besides others still more horrible. These outrages being directed chiefly against the British subjects, the perpetrators of them were in secret favoured by Scindia and the other Mahratta chiefs, though they affected in public the greatest horror of them; and it was easy to foresee that any measures against them would bring the English Government into collision with the whole Mahratta confederacy. But the outrages had become so formidable that the Marquess of Hastings at length felt the absolute necessity of repressing them; and he made such urgent representations on the subject to the Court of Directors that they authorised the commencement of hostilities, being convinced, in their own words, "of the irrepressible tendency of our Indian power to enlarge its bounds and augment its preponderance, in spite of the most peremptory injunctions to forbearance from home, and of the most scrupulous obedience to them in the government abroad."

46. Fortified with this authority, Lord Hastings commenced operations on the greatest scale, convinced that he would have, sooner or later in the course of the contest, the whole powers of Central India on his hands, who could bring into the field 180,000

horse, 97,000 foot, and 600 guns.* An attack upon them in their own dominions from different quarters was, therefore, resolved on, and the forces assembled for the purpose were on a scale worthy of the grandeur and power of England. They amounted to 91,000 regular troops, of whom 10,225 were cavalry, with 120 guns, besides 23,000 irregular horse. This large force was divided into two armies—one in the north drawn from Bengal, one in the south from Madras and Bombay. The plan of operations was for the northern army to assemble in the Doab, and, crossing the Jumna in three divisions, to advance southwards into the Mahratta country—one division to Dholpore, on the Chumbul, another by the Sind river, to the neighbourhood of Gwalior, the third to Sangor. A strong reserve was to take post at Rewaree to cover Delhi. The southern corps, or army of the Deccan, under Sir T. Hislop, was to advance in two columns to the north, cross the Nerbudda at Hindia and Hosangabad, and, pushing on by Oojein and Bhopal, drive the Pindarrees before it up against the descending masses of the Bengal host. It left two divisions to protect its rear—one under Brigadier Smith to observe the Peishwa, another under Brigadier Doveton to watch the Rajah of Nagpore. The subsidiary forces at the courts of both these native princes were also considerably increased. On the 20th October 1817, the Governor-General himself assumed the command of the grand army at Secundra, near Kalpee, and, after crossing the Jumna on a bridge of boats, advanced to a position to the south of Gwalior, where Scindia had established himself in a permanent camp. The intercepted

* Viz.—

	Horse.	Foot.	Guns.
Peishwa, . . .	28,000	13,800	37
Scindia, . . .	14,250	16,250	140
Holkar, . . .	20,000	7,940	107
Bhonslay, . . .	15,766	17,826	85
Nizam, . . .	25,000	20,000	47
Patana, . . .	12,000	20,000	200
Pindarrees, . .	15,000	1,500	20
	<hr/> 130,016	<hr/> 97,316	<hr/> 596

—M. MARTIN, p. 415.

letters which had been received left no doubt of the accession of the great Mahratta chief to the confederacy; he was only waiting for the junction of the Patans under Ameer Khan to commence hostilities. He had not anticipated, however, the vigour and decision of the English commander-in-chief, and found himself unable to withstand alone the formidable force arrayed against him. The consequence was he was obliged to yield. He agreed, as the price of peace, to unite his forces with those of the British against the Pindarrees, and, as a pledge of his sincerity, to surrender in the mean time the forts of Hindia and Asurghur.

47. This blow, the deserved reward of foresight in preparation and promptitude in action, was decisive of the fate of the war. The treaty exacted from Scindia was speedily followed by the submission of the Patans and other lesser chiefs who lay next exposed to attack, and were equally incapable of resistance. The Pindarrees, finding themselves thus abandoned, retreated slowly before the advancing host, placing their last hopes on the secret assurancé they had received of support from Poonah, the great centre of the Mahratta power. As usual with Asiatics in danger, they sought to gain time by elusory negotiations. But Lord Hastings was aware of their policy, and not to be deceived by their wiles. In the mean time, the Peishwa, the head of the Mahratta confederacy, after various proceedings indicative of the hostile spirit by which he was actuated, appeared with all his forces in the plain in front of his capital, the town of Poonah, and took post between the residency and the camp of the British subsidiary force. The former was immediately burned; but, desirous of averting hostilities with the latter, he ordered his troops not to fire the first gun. Before the order was received, however, the action had already commenced by a battery of nine guns opening fire on the British on the right. This was immediately followed by a splendid charge of 6000 horse, bearing the swallow-tailed golden pennon of the empire. They were received

by Colonel Burr, the intrepid commander of the 7th regiment, who maintained his post, calm and collected, beside the colours, though one ball went through his hat, and another shot his horse dead. Fortunately, the Mahratta charge was broken by a ditch which ran in front of the British line, and as the horsemen were scrambling out of it they were exposed to so severe a fire from the 7th regiment that they fell back in disorder. The advance of the English, which immediately followed, proved the signal for a general retreat. This battle, which bears the name of KIRKEE, was one of the hardest fought and most glorious that ever occurred in India, for the disproportion of numbers engaged was immense. The whole force engaged on the side of the British was 2800, of whom only 800 were Europeans. Their loss amounted to 186 killed and 57 wounded. The Mahratta force was 18,000 horse and 8000 foot, and they lost 500 men in the affair.

48. This glorious victory was soon followed by the arrival of Brigadier-General Smith's division to the support of Burr's little force, and the surrender of Poonah, which capitulated on 17th November—the Peishwa, with all his forces, retreating up the Ghauts into the hill-country. Thither he was immediately followed by General Smith at the head of a considerable British force, who tried in vain to bring him to action. On the 1st of January 1818, a detachment under Captain Staunton, consisting of one battalion of sepoy, 400 irregular horse, and 2 guns, fell in accidentally at Corygaum with the whole force of the Peishwa, 25,900 strong. Though the disparity was so prodigious, the British commander was not discouraged, but, boldly pushing forward, took possession of a small edifice which had originally been a temple, where he prepared to maintain himself to the last extremity. The Peishwa immediately invested the little body of heroes with all his forces, and, deeming victory secure, ascended a neighbouring height with the Rajah of Sattara, in order to witness the surrender of the Brit-

ish. The contest seemed hopeless, but capitulation was never once thought of in that heroic band. "See," said Captain Staunton, pointing to the headless trunk of Lieutenant Chisholm, which was lying beside a gun, "the mercy of the Mahrattas." The troops, though worn to death with fatigue, and fainting from thirst, declared to a man they would rather die than fall into the hands of such implacable foes. Happily, towards evening a supply of water was received, and the defence was kept up with such vigour that the post was maintained till dark. The firing gradually ceased; and in the morning, when the British were preparing to renew it, the enemy was descried moving off in the direction of Poonah, in consequence of the rumoured advance of General Smith. The battalion engaged lost 153 men, the cavalry 96, in this glorious combat.

49. Immediately after this success, Sattara was invested by General Smith, and it capitulated on the following day. From thence a proclamation was issued, taking formal possession of the Peishwa's territories in the name of the British Government, with the exception of a small portion which was to be restored to the Rajah of Sattara. After this advantage General Smith again started in pursuit of the enemy; and on the 19th February he came up at Ashtee with a body of 9000 horse, with whom a fierce conflict immediately ensued. Such was the skill with which the Mahratta cavalry were handled, that the British were thrown into some confusion; and the consequences might have been very serious, had not, in the *mêlée*, Gokla, their renowned leader, been slain. The Mahrattas, when on the verge of victory, deprived of their leader, fell into disorder, and fled, leaving their baggage-camels and elephants to the unexpected victors. In this action the British loss was only 19, and 200 of the enemy were found dead upon the field. After this success the Rajah of Sattara, who had been in the Peishwa's camp, fell into the hands of the victors, and was taken under the protection of the Com-

pany, and General Smith resumed his pursuit of the Mahratta horse. It was attended, however, with great hardships; for the enemy retreated with extraordinary rapidity, and many of the British, toiling after them over waterless plains under a burning sun, were struck dead by *coup-de-soleil*. The sufferings of the enemy, however, were not less severe, and at length the Peishwa, worn out with a desultory warfare, from which he had no prospect of retrieving his fortunes, surrendered, and became a pensioner of the British Government.

50. Meanwhile events nearly similar in character had taken place at Nagpore. Appa Sahib, the Rajah of that place, had collected his troops when the Peishwa made his movement at Poonah. On this the Resident ordered the British subsidiary force, under Colonel Scott, consisting of 1400 men (nearly all sepoy) with 4 guns, to take post on the hill of Seet-abuldee, commanding the city. Here it was attacked on the evening of the 26th November by the Rajah's army, 9200 strong, with 35 guns. A severe action ensued, which lasted for eighteen hours. The enemy advanced with vigour, and, using their great superiority of numbers, compelled the troops to abandon a height they held in advance and retreat to the summit of the hill. Here they were assailed on all sides, and on the point of being overwhelmed, when a panic was raised in the Rajah's army by the headlong charge of Captain Fitzgerald at the head of a small body of native cavalry. The whole British force instantly advanced. The enemy turned and fled. Dismayed at this defeat, the Rajah entered into negotiations. Time was gained. Brigadier Doveton arrived with his division, and on the 16th December, Appa Sahib, losing heart, agreed to the Resident's terms and came in to the British camp. His troops, however, refused to give up their guns and surrender the city as stipulated. Doveton attacked and captured the guns at once; but was repulsed by the Arab garrison in an assault upon the city on the 23d.

They capitulated, however, on the 30th. It soon became evident that Appa Sahib was continuing his intrigues and encouraging his officers to resistance; he was, therefore, formally deposed, and a new and infant Rajah placed upon the throne. The ex-Rajah soon after made his escape, and took refuge in Scindia's fortress of Asurghur. Three strong forts in Nagpore still refused to submit; but Mundela surrendered to a force under General Marshall in April 1818, and Chouragurgh was evacuated on the approach of General Watson. Chanda, however, still held out, and against it the division of Colonel Adams was moved from Hoosingabad. Invested on the 9th, it was stormed on the 20th April, and the last embers of resistance extinguished in the Nagpore state.

51. While these brilliant operations were breaking the strength of the Mahrattas, the troops engaged against the Pindarrees were afflicted with a visitation of Providence far more terrible than the sword of man. After the signature of the treaty of alliance with Scindia, on 5th November 1817, the CHOLERA, then for the first time known in British history, broke out with the utmost violence in Lord Hastings's army, and from the very outset committed the most dreadful ravages. The year had been one of scarcity, the grain was of inferior quality, and the situation of the British cantonment low and unhealthy.

was thus prepared for the ravages of the epidemic, which soon set in with terrible severity. For ten days the camp was nothing but an hospital; in one week 764 soldiers and 8000 camp-followers perished. At length the troops were removed to higher and more airy cantonments, and upon this the malady ceased—a memorable fact for the instruction of future times. As was afterwards often experienced, the ravages of the pestilence were greatest among the lowest portion of the people; only 148 Europeans perished in November, but above 10,000 natives fell victims to the malady. When it spread to Calcutta, it destroyed 200 a-day for a

long time, chiefly among the worst fed and most destitute of the people.

52. Notwithstanding this misfortune, which abated in three weeks, the advance of Lord Hastings upon Gwalior effectually prevented any co-operation between the Mahrattas and Pindarrees; and the latter, pursued by an overwhelming force, enclosed between the advancing armies of Bengal and the Deccan, and destitute of any strongholds or fortifications, were unable to make any effectual resist-

ance. They were pursued in all directions, and all cut down or dispersed, with the exception of a small body, which took refuge in the camp of Holkar, near Mahidpoor. The government of the Holkar principality was at this time in the hands of Toolsa Bye, the favourite in the seraglio, and she had in her turn confided it to the Dewan, Gumput Rao. The troops, however, doubting their ability to withstand the forces of Sir Thomas Hislop, which, after crossing the Nerbudda at Hindia, and occupying Oojein, were advancing against them, mutinied, threw Gumput Rao into prison, carried off Toolsa Bye to the banks of the Supon, where she was beheaded in the night while uttering piercing shrieks, and got possession of Mulhar Rao, now the acknowledged heir of the Holkar dominions. Two days after (21st December 1817) a decisive battle was fought with such of Holkar's forces as still held out, and the remnant of the Pindarrees, which ended, after an arduous struggle in which the British lost 800 men, in the entire defeat of the enemy, who were weakened by the loss of 3000. The mother of Mulhar Rao, who was the regent, upon this immediately made submission to the British; and, in return for the cession of a considerable tract of territory to the south of the Sautpoora range, was confirmed in the possession of her remaining territories. Some of the rajahs in her dominions repudiated this arrangement, and tried to renew the war, but they were pursued, and dispersed or taken. These successes were fatal to the Pindarrees, by depriving them of any support among

the native powers. They retreated into the jungles and woody fastnesses, where they were actively pursued by the peasantry, who, in revenge for their former cruelties, massacred them without mercy. The last chief of these formidable bands was Chutoo, and at the head of 200 followers he long remained at large. At length his horse was found grazing near the jungles of Asurghur, saddled and bridled, and at a little distance a heap of torn and blood-stained garments, and a half-eaten human head, the remains of a tiger's feast—"the fitting death," as M. Martin well observes, "of the last of the Pindarrees."

53. The Pindarree war was now at an end, and nothing more was heard of these audacious marauders. Without a home, without leaders, without strongholds, they never again attempted to make head against the British power. They were gradually merged in the ordinary population, and resumed the habits of pacific life. Many of them settled in the Deccan and Malwa as cultivators, and, employing their energies in the right direction, became active and industrious farmers, as old soldiers often do. The Mahratta war was now practically ended; but the flight of Appa Sahib, the ex-Rajah of Nagpore, caused some anxiety, which was only terminated in April 1819 by the capture of the important fortress of Asurghur, from which he escaped in the disguise of a fakir, and sank into insignificance, from which he never afterwards emerged.* The war had lingered long in the valley of Candeish, where there were various Arab garrisons, which were not finally expelled till June 1818, when Malligum, the strongest fort in the valley in their possession, was taken. The remaining years of Lord Hastings's administration were devoted to pacific duties, and the consolidation of the vast empire which he had brought under the British rule. Mr. after-

* The fortress of Asurghur was to have been surrendered by Scindia, but Lord Hastings remitted this stipulation of the treaty until Appa Sahib took refuge in it. The governor then refused to surrender, and it had to be reduced by force.

wards SIR THOMAS MUNRO, here gave token of the great civil and military abilities he possessed, in taking possession of and regulating the country ceded by the treaty of Poonah—abilities so great as to justify the eulogium of Mr Canning, who said "that Europe could not boast a more distinguished statesman, or Asia a braver warrior." Lord Hastings resigned his office in January 1823, and returned to this country, where he was rewarded for his glorious and successful government of India by the gift of £60,000 to purchase an estate in the United Kingdom, in addition to those he had inherited from his Plantagenet ancestors. After his return he was appointed Governor of Malta, where he died in 1826, in consequence of a fall from his horse.

54. His administration of India, during the nine years he held that arduous office, must be regarded as a model of vigour and ability. Clearly discerning the nature of the tenure by which, and which alone, our Indian empire was held, he as clearly perceived the only mode by which it could be preserved. Constantly threatened by a coalition of the native powers, whose united forces, if brought together, would much exceed what he could assemble at any one point, he saw that the only mode of combating it was by anticipating the attack, and opposing to the unwieldy strength of an alliance the vigour and celerity of single direction. His policy in attacking the coalition of the Pindarrees and Mahrattas in 1817, before they had time to unite their forces, was precisely that which Frederick the Great adopted when he attacked the allies in the camp of Pirna in 1756, and won Silesia by his promptitude, and which Napoleon pursued against the coalition of the Continental powers in 1805, 1806, and 1809, and which was rewarded by the victories of Ulm, Jena, and Echmuhl. It met, accordingly, with similar and equally deserved success. He brought the Indian Government, by his vigour and capacity, through one of the most dangerous crises of its modern history, augmented its territory, enhanced its

renown, and finally broke the power of the Mahrattas, the most formidable and daring of its enemies. Under his administration the revenues of the state rose from £17,228,000 in 1813, to £23,120,000 in 1823. It is true, the military expenditure increased in a still greater proportion, being, on an average of five years from 1817 to 1822, £9,770,000; and the debt was enlarged by £2,800,000. But this arose entirely from the necessities of his situation, and the tolerance so long extended to the ferocious Pindarrees and the encroaching Mahrattas by the timorous and economising policy of the Court of Directors during the administration of his predecessors. If ever a Governor-General deserved a statue of gold, it was the Marquess of Hastings.

55. Upon the retirement of Lord Hastings, the place he had so ably filled was at first destined for Mr Caning; but the changes in the Cabinet consequent on the death of the Marquess of Londonderry in 1822, led, as already mentioned, to his being placed at the head of the Foreign Office, and LORD AMHERST was selected for the direction of Indian affairs, and arrived at Calcutta in August 1823; the provisional government, since the departure of the Marquess of Hastings, having been in the hands of Mr John Adam, an able and honest man. The first subject which forced itself upon Lord Amherst's attention was the approaching war with the BURMESE on the eastern frontier of the empire, which it was evident could not be much longer averted, and which was the more formidable from the unknown nature of the country in which it was to be conducted, and the vague reports received of the boundless power of the potentate by whom it was to be maintained. The Burmese, originally subject to the neighbouring kingdom of Pegu, had revolted in 1753, and established a separate dominion, which progressively increased for seventy years, until it was brought into serious collision with the British power. The first cause of difference between them arose from the immigration into the British province of Arra-

can of some thousand peasants from the Burmese territory, who sought refuge in the Company's territories from the intolerable tyranny of their native oppressors. In 1798, nearly ten thousand of these persecuted wretches rushed over the frontier in a state of frenzied desperation. They arrived in the English territories almost naked and starving—men, women, and children at the breast—but all declaring that they would prefer taking refuge in the jungles, and living, as they had done for months, on “reptiles and leaves,” amidst tigers and lions, to placing themselves again under the odious tyranny of the Burmese.

56. The British Government, though alarmed at such a formidable irruption, even when only of starving suppliants, taking compassion on their sufferings, assigned them some waste lands for their subsistence, and they were soon settled there to the number of forty thousand. The expulsion of these settlers from the British territories was repeatedly demanded by the Burmese authorities; but Lord Wellesley and Lord Hastings refused to do so, as contrary to the laws of hospitality, though they offered to surrender any malefactor who might have injured the Burmese, and even to permit the latter to seek for them in the British territories. This concession the government of Ava, which ruled the Burmese empire, ascribed, according to the usual custom of Asiatics, to weakness and fear on the part of the British Government; and an alliance was attempted to be formed between the King of Ava and Runjeet Singh, and other Indian potentates, for the expulsion of the English from India. Hostilities were thus evidently impending, but they were for some years averted by the conciliatory conduct of the British Government, which, engaged in the Ghoorka and Pindarree wars, had no wish to be involved in fresh hostilities. This conduct the Court of Ava deemed decisive proof of conscious weakness; and with a view to bring on hostilities, a descent of Burmese took place in September 1823, attended with the slaughter of

the British guard on the island of Shahpoori, at the entrance of the arm of the sea dividing Chittagong from Arracan, and within the British territories. An explanation of this aggression was demanded, but the only answer returned was, that Shahpoori "rightfully belonged to the fortunate king of the white elephant, lord of the earth and seas; and that the non-admission of the claim of the 'golden foot' would be followed by the immediate invasion of the British territories." The Burmese Government were as good as their word, for a force immediately advanced to within five miles of the town of Sylhet, which is only two hundred and twenty-six miles from Calcutta. This brought matters to a crisis; and Lord Amherst, though with the utmost reluctance, took steps to punish the aggression, and assert the honour of the British arms.

57. The military strength of the Burmese was considerable, and both their Government and troops were inspired with the most extravagant idea of their own prowess, and of the irresistible nature of the power which they wielded. Emboldened by a long train of victories over their unwarlike neighbours in the Cochin-China peninsula, they deemed themselves invincible, and, never having been brought in contact with them, were utterly ignorant both of the force of European arms and the strength of the British power. With a body of enemies at once so ignorant and so presumptuous, there would, in the ordinary case, have been no serious difficulty in contending. But the Burmese war was rendered a difficult, and, as it proved, a very murderous one, by the nature of the country in which it was to be carried on, and the peculiar species of defence which this had suggested to its inhabitants. The territories in which it was to be waged, forming the alluvial plains of the Irrawaddy, could only be reached either by crossing a mountain-range 6000 feet high, and impassable for artillery, which separated it from the plain of Bengal, or by ascending the course of that great river after taking Rangoon, which lies at its

mouth. The latter appeared the easier and more natural course; but steam navigation was then in its infancy; no flotilla, impelled by that powerful agent, existed to breast the stream and surmount its descending waves; and the banks on either side, thick, set with jungle, were in the months of summer and autumn extremely unhealthy. Add to this, experience had taught the Burmese the art of constructing wooden barricades or stockades in the vast forests with which their country abounded, and through which the advances required to be made, and which, concealed by a leafy screen till the assailants were almost at them, were nearly impervious to shot, and so firmly set as to be extremely difficult to force. Behind these impenetrable barriers, the Burmese marksmen, themselves secure, took aim with fatal effect at the assailants, and it required all the firmness of the bravest men to advance under the murderous fire.

58. The first operation of the war, as so often happens with English military operations, proved unfortunate. Nearly as ignorant of the strength and resources of the enemy as they were of ours, the force destined to act against the enemy by the British Government was not half of what was requisite for success. It was wisely, and in fact from necessity, determined to commence operations by a descent on Rangoon, and to march up the course of the Irrawaddy; but as this required the troops to embark from Madras and Calcutta, a very great difficulty was experienced with the native troops, part of whom positively refused to go on board. The consequence was, that the expedition consisted only of 11,000 men, of whom one-half were Europeans—an unprecedented proportion in Oriental wars, and which would probably have insured early and decisive success, if it had been possible to bring them at once into action. Rangoon was abandoned without any serious resistance, and presented a valuable base of operations; and this was followed by the successful storming of the fortified post of Kemendine, six miles distant on the

Rangoon river, one of the mouths of the Irrawaddy, which was carried, after a gallant resistance, by the 41st and detachments of the 13th and 38th regiments and Madras European regiment, Major, afterwards SIR ROBERT SALE being the first man who reached the summit of the work. But this success, though considerable, was the limit of our advantages, and ere long the invading army found itself involved in a mesh of difficulties, arising partly from the pestilential nature of the climate, and partly from the peculiar species of defence which their local advantages had suggested to the enemy.

59. The progress of the army, even though successful in every encounter, was necessarily slow, from the thick jungle with which the country was beset, and the pestilential miasmata, which a tropical sun drew up from the swamps with which it was everywhere intersected. To advance in these circumstances, and make the men sleep in the deadly thickets, seemed little short of madness, as it was to expose them to certain destruction; and yet to remain where they were seemed hardly less hazardous, for Rangoon in the autumnal months is so unhealthy that all the inhabitants who can get away leave it at that period. The British army was soon reduced by disease to less than half its former numerical amount; and the survivors were sadly depressed in spirit by seeing so many of their comrades stretched on the bed of sickness or buried around them. Encouraged by the slow progress which the invaders were making, the Burmese Government made the most vigorous efforts to expel them altogether from their territory. Reinforcements and stores poured in on all sides, and the Burmese general received orders to assail the British and drive them out of the country. Notwithstanding his serious losses by sickness, Sir Archibald Campbell, the British commander, resolved to anticipate the attack by offensive operations on his own side. An expedition was sent (June 25) against the island of Cheduba, where 600 of the Burmese

were intrenched, which was carried with the loss of half their forces and the capture of the rajah. Soon after (July 1), the Burmese, in three columns, made a general attack on the right of the English position, but they were repulsed at all points into the jungle without the loss of a single man to the victors. It was now evident that they were no match for the English in the field; but still behind their stockades, and aided by their forests and pestilential swamps, they were formidable antagonists. On the 8th July the British moved in two columns against the enemy, the one under General Macbean by land, the other, under Sir Archibald Campbell in person, proceeding by boats on the river to destroy some strong works which the enemy had erected to bar farther passage up the stream.

60. Both attacks proved successful. After an hour's cannonade from the ships under Captain Marryat, a practicable breach was made in the stockade on the shore; the stormers were immediately landed, and carried three intrenchments, armed with fourteen guns, in the most gallant style. The operations of the land column were equally successful. On arriving in the vicinity of the enemy, General Macbean found himself faced by a network of stockades, armed with heavy artillery, presenting, in the central redoubt, three lines of intrenchments, one within the other, and garrisoned by at least 10,000 men. Nothing daunted by these formidable means of resistance, Macbean ordered the scaling-ladders to the front, and the storming party, consisting of detachments of the 13th, 38th, and 89th regiments, advanced to the assault. In ten minutes the first line was carried; the second quickly shared the same fate, and the third, after a violent struggle, was also stormed. Major Sale singled out a Burmese chief of high rank for combat, and slew him with his own hand. Soon after other stockades were carried, and the assailants penetrated into the inner work, after a desperate struggle, by mounting on each other's shoulders. The victory was now

complete : ten stockades, armed with thirty pieces of cannon, were carried without a shot being fired, by escalade ; and the enemy, four times the number of the assailants, were driven from their intrenchments with the loss of 800 men.

61. Various attacks, some successful, and some unsuccessful, were made on stockades of the enemy near Rangoon, with a view to extending the quarters of the army and getting supplies during August and September ; and at length an expedition, consisting of native infantry, under Colonel Smith, was despatched (October 10) to attack a fortified position of the enemy at Kydloo, fourteen miles from Rangoon. The work to be assailed consisted of a pagoda, strongly garrisoned and barricaded, surrounded by several exterior lines of stockades. The latter were soon carried ; but when the troops approached the pagoda itself, they were assailed by so severe a fire from a covered and unseen enemy that most of the British officers who led the column were killed or wounded, and the few who survived were forced to take refuge from the deadly storm of bullets by flying to the nearest shelter. The result was that the sepoys dispersed, abandoned all the works they had carried, and sought safety in flight, which would have been most disastrous had not reinforcements, despatched by Sir A. Campbell, reached them ere long, and covered their retreat to Rangoon. The panic on this occasion, as is often the case in war, was not confined to the assailants ; it extended also to the enemy ; and when General O'Reagh advanced a few days after to renew the attack, he found the works entirely abandoned by them. The British were soon after consoled for this discomfiture by a successful expedition under Colonel Godwin against the town of Martaban, which was stormed on the 29th October by a detachment of the 41st and part of the 3d Madras native infantry. Immense military stores of all descriptions here rewarded the courage of the victors.

62. These alternate successes and

defeats, however, determined nothing, and ere long the natural difficulties of the campaign appeared with fatal effect in the invading army. The country around Rangoon had been entirely devastated by orders of the Burmese Government ; and the thickness of the jungle and strength of their stockaded positions rendered it impossible for the British to extend their posts farther into the interior. The result was, that being cooped up in an unhealthy town in the autumnal months, without fresh meat or vegetables, the troops became fearfully sickly—fever and dysentery spread fatal ravages in the camp, and before the end of autumn there were not 3000 men left in it capable of bearing arms. These calamities, to which the Burmese Government were no strangers, encouraged them to persevere in their resistance, notwithstanding the repeated and unexpected reverses which they had experienced from their strange invaders. They were the more induced to continue the war, from an old tradition that the capital would remain invincible till a “magical vessel should advance against it without oars or sails.”

63. The determination of the Government of Ava to persevere in the contest was much strengthened by reverses which at the same period befell the British arms on the land side towards Arracan. The operations there were conducted chiefly with a view to defence, as the principal attack was intended to be made up the Irrawaddy from Rangoon. Captain Noton was stationed at Ramoo to cover the British frontier in that quarter, with 350 native infantry and 650 irregulars. The latter could not be relied on ; and a movement of the whole in advance having been attended by many checks, the British commander fell back to Ramoo, where he was soon surrounded by a force six times superior in number of the enemy. Notwithstanding this fearful disproportion, Noton gallantly maintained his position for several days, trusting to the arrival of reinforcements from Chittagong in the rear, which were reported to have left

that place on the 13th May, and were hourly expected. They did not come up, however; and meanwhile the enemy pushed their approaches with such vigour that, on the 17th, they were within twelve paces of the British advanced works, and had got possession of a tank in rear, from which the troops had their sole supply of water. Retreat had now become unavoidable, and for some time it was conducted with tolerable steadiness, but at length the irregulars fell into disorder; the confusion spread to the sepoys, who, instead of closing their ranks—the only chance of safety in such circumstances—disbanded and fled. Captain Noton and most of the officers were killed, nobly fighting to the last; three only, with a small portion of the troops, made their escape. This disaster soon brought others in its train. The British force at Sylhet was withdrawn to Chittagong; the Burmese again entered Cachar; and such was the consternation which prevailed, and the unprotected state of the frontier, that, had the Burmese been in greater force, they might have advanced to and possibly taken Calcutta.

64. Had the British Government been actuated by the instability of purpose by which the Oriental dynasties are in general characterised, they would in all probability, after these repeated disasters, have desisted from any further attempts against the kingdom of Ava. But this was not the national character, which is as much marked by vigour and energy, when roused and heated in a contest, as it is by supineness and want of preparation before it commences. The utmost efforts were made to reinforce the armies both at Rangoon and on the Arracan frontier, and the Diana war-steamer was added to the flotilla on the river. They had need of all their resources, for the preparations of the Burmese were very great. Meng Bundoola, who had commanded the force which had gained such successes in Arracan, was withdrawn from the direction of that army, and placed at the head of a formidable army of twenty thousand men, which proceeded, on

the 1st of December, to invest the British troops in Rangoon, against which approaches were made with great skill, and in a style which very closely resembled that which afterwards became so famous when practised by the Russians in the defence of Sebastopol. The trenches consisted of a succession of holes or rifle-pits, each capable of containing two men, excavated so as to afford complete shelter from any horizontal fire, and into which the descent of a shell could only kill two men. Under the bank a hole was cut in each, entirely under cover, where a bed of straw and brushwood was prepared, where one reposed while the other watched. So rapidly were these subterraneous lodgings formed, that the whole army seemed to have been suddenly swallowed up by the earth. Various sortics were made by the British to impede the approaches, in one of which, on the 5th, directed against their left, Major Sale and Major Walker, at the head of their respective columns, gained considerable success, though the latter was unfortunately killed in the moment of victory. On the 7th, a vigorous attack was made on the whole of the enemy's lines, from which they were driven with great loss into the neighbouring jungle. But being strongly reinforced, they soon after returned to the attack, and contrived to introduce a number of spies and incendiaries into the town of Rangoon, who set it on fire (Dec. 14) in several places, and the conflagration was not got under till half the buildings had been consumed.

65. The situation of the British army was now critical in the extreme, cooped up in a half-burnt and unhealthy city, surrounded by an army ten times as numerous as their own, whose approaches had been pushed close up to the place. From these straits they were happily extricated by the daring, and, in the circumstances, wise conduct of the commander-in-chief, seconded by the heroic valour of his troops. The whole force which could be spared for a sortie amounted only to fifteen hundred men, and they were led, on the 15th, to the attack of twenty thou-

sand brave and skilful troops intrenched to the teeth in stockades. The attempt seemed little short of madness, but nevertheless it entirely succeeded. Both attacks—the one headed by Sir Archibald Campbell in person, against their front, the other by General Cotton, to turn their left—proved victorious; and in fifteen minutes the most formidable works ever yet seen in the country were carried by storm, and the enemy driven into the surrounding jungles. On the same day an attack was made by the *Diana* and other war-vessels, under Lieutenant Kellett of the *Arachne*, upon the flotilla of the enemy, of which forty were taken. On this occasion the terrible efficacy of war-steamers was first signally evinced; the *Diana* ploughed through the flotilla of the enemy as if moved by magic, and with every broadside sent some of them to the bottom.

66. Taught by these disasters the quality of the enemy with whom they had to deal, the Burmese generals raised the siege, and retired towards Prome, the second city in the Burmese empire. Sir Archibald Campbell, having been reinforced by the 47th regiment and some cavalry and artillery, resolved to pursue them thither, and with this view advanced, on the 13th February 1825, in two columns, the one commanded by himself in person, consisting of two thousand five hundred men, who went by land, of whom one-half were European infantry; the other of one thousand five hundred, moving by water, under General Cotton. The latter column, in the course of its advance, encountered a large body of the enemy intrenched in a stockaded position at Donabew. An attack upon this work failed in consequence of its extreme strength, which proved impervious alike to the bayonets and the hatchets of the assailants. Upon learning this reverse, Sir Archibald, who had arrived at U-an-deet, hastened back with his own column to the spot, which he reached on the 25th March, and soon saw that the work was much too strong to be carried by a *coup-de-main*. The stockade, which extended for nearly a mile

along the bank of the Irrawaddy, was composed of solid teak beams, resting on strong stakes driven into the earth, and piled one above another to the height of seventeen feet. The interior of the work, consisting of brick ramparts, armed with a hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, was protected against the explosion of shells by frequent traverses; and in front of all was an abattis composed of sharpened stakes, and a deep ditch rendered almost impassable by spikes, sword-blades, and other implements of destruction stuck in the earth. Wisely judging these works far too strong to be carried by escalade, Sir Archibald brought up his whole troops and flotilla to the attack, and commenced approaches against it in form. On the 27th the flotilla appeared in sight, and, headed by the *Diana*, found its way up, after sustaining a heavy cannonade, so as to effect a junction with the land forces, and their combined attack soon proved irresistible. A spirited sortie, headed by seventeen war-elephants, each bearing a tower filled with armed men, was repulsed by the steadiness of the Governor-General's body-guard, under Captain Sneyd; three days after, the commander-in-chief of the Burmese, Bundoola, was killed by a rocket; and the breaching batteries having commenced a heavy fire, the garrison was seized with a sudden panic, and fled, leaving behind them stores of ammunition and provisions sufficient to serve the British army for months to come.

67. After this brilliant achievement Sir Archibald returned to his line of march towards Prome, before which he arrived on the 24th April.* He entered it without opposition next day, finding the town deserted, and partially on fire, but still armed by 100 pieces of cannon. Such was the strength of this position, that in Sir A. Campbell's opinion 10,000 steady soldiers might have defended it against 100,000 men. Active operations were then suspended for some months, in consequence of the

* He was joined at U-an-deet by Brigadier M'Creagh, with a reinforcement from Rangoon.

setting in of the heavy rains, and excessive inundations on the banks of the Irrawaddy. Meanwhile, however, important movements went on, and great successes were gained on the land-frontier. Colonel Richards there recovered the province of Assam, which had been almost entirely lost after the disaster at Ramoo, and carried by storm a stockade near Rungpore, which had the effect of bringing the whole province into subjection. An attempt was afterwards made to penetrate from Sylhet into the Burmese territory through Cachar, with 7000 men under General Shuldham; but the expedition was abandoned in consequence of the inextricable difficulties of the miry soil, after an enormous loss in elephants, camels, and bullocks.* But the grand effort was directed against the province of Arracan, to subdue which an army of 11,000 men was assembled at Chittagong under the orders of General Morrison, supported by a powerful flotilla under Commodore Hayes. These forces, having effected a junction, moved against Arracan, which they reached on the evening of the 28th March. They found the approach to the capital barred by a Burmese force of 9000 men, which occupied a strong stockaded position on the summit of a range of hills, from three to four hundred feet in height, plentifully lined with artillery, and strengthened by escarpment, abattis, and masonry. The position, traversed only by a single pass, was formidable in the extreme; but with the characteristic daring of British officers, it was resolved to make the attempt to carry it by storm.

68. The attack was made on the centre at daybreak on the 29th, led by the light company of the 54th under Lieutenant Clark, supported by detachments of the 10th and 16th native Madras infantry. The ascent proved exceedingly steep, and as the troops toiled up, they were crushed by huge stones rolled down upon them, and a well-directed fire from above, which

* A small body of irregular troops subsequently penetrated into Cachar, and occupied Manipore.

they had no means of answering. Notwithstanding these obstacles, the assailants persevered with the most devoted gallantry, and Lieutenant Clark, with several of the 54th, even got their hands on the trench; but all their efforts to penetrate were unavailing, and the storming party was driven back after every European officer in it had been killed or wounded. The point of attack was now changed, and it was directed against the right of the enemy's position, where the ascent was so precipitous that less care had been taken to strengthen it. To divert the enemy's attention from it, a battery was constructed and a vigorous fire kept up on the pass in the centre, where the main road traversed the hills, which continued the whole night, and meanwhile, in the dark, the assault on the right was made, and with entire success. The troops, after encountering unnumbered difficulties from the steepness of the ascent, which the enemy had deemed impracticable, reached the summit unperceived, and got in with very little difficulty, and without the loss of a man. Upon seeing the British standard flying upon these important heights in the morning, and preparations made to attack the remaining portions of the line, the enemy abandoned the whole position, and Arracan was occupied without further resistance.

69. So far the most brilliant success had attended this expedition, in which both officers and men of the native service, as well as the European, had displayed the most brilliant valour. But soon the wonted difficulties of the climate beset the victors; and the ulterior object of crossing the mountains and joining Sir Archibald Campbell at Prome was rendered impracticable. Soon after Arracan was taken the rainy season commenced, and brought with it the usual amount of fever and dysentery, which soon cut off vast numbers whom the sword had spared. So fearful did the ravages become that sickness in Arracan was speedily all but universal; and although the enemy had abandoned the whole province, it was found necessary to withdraw the troops

to more healthy stations, leaving detachments only on the islands of Cheduba and Ramce. The troops under Sir Archibald Campbell at Prome were suffering hardly less from fever and dysentery, insomuch that active operations were during the rainy season entirely suspended. The Burmese Government took advantage of this period of forced inactivity to open negotiations, after the usual Asiatic fashion, to gain time, and meanwhile extensive levies of troops were ordered in all parts of their dominions. The negotiations, as might have been expected, though protracted as long as possible by the Burmese plenipotentiaries, who were scrupulous in insisting upon every formality which could redound to the honour of the "King of the white elephant," came to nothing; and hostilities having been resumed, the Burmese army in great force advanced against the British. Two unsuccessful attacks on detached bodies of the enemy by native troops having been made, the Burmese general advanced close to the British lines, cautiously throwing up stockades and intrenchments as he drew near.

70. Perceiving that the crisis was approaching, and being desirous to bring it on before the enemy had materially strengthened their position, Sir Archibald wisely resolved to anticipate them, and attack them in their newly-formed intrenchments. The assault took place, accordingly, on the 1st of December, and was powerfully aided by the flotilla under the command of Sir James Brisbane. Two columns of attack were formed of the land forces—one under General Cotton, the other under the commander-in-chief in person. The first was destined to attack in front the enemy's lines on the left, the second to turn their flank and assail them when endeavouring to retreat. Both attacks proved entirely successful. Cotton carried all the stockades opposed to him in ten minutes, drove out the enemy's masses with great slaughter, and in the course of their flight they were opened upon, when endeavouring to cross a river, by Campbell's horse-artillery, which did

dreadful execution. At this point fell Maha-Namion, a gallant old chief, seventy-five years of age, who had been brought out in a litter, at his own request, to take part in the action. By this success the Burmese position on the left was entirely carried, and the troops in it thrown back upon the centre; but there, and on the right, they stood firm. The action was accordingly renewed on the succeeding day, when, after a vigorous cannonade both from the land-batteries and the flotilla, an assault was made on the enemy's centre. It was led by the 13th and 38th regiments, under Major Howlett and Major Frith, supported by part of the 87th, who made a supporting attack through the jungle in flank. The 38th headed the storm, which was executed in the most gallant style, and the whole intrenchments in the centre, above two miles in length, were carried, while at the same time the flotilla took or destroyed all the boats and stores which had been brought down for the use of the army. Nothing remained now to the enemy but their intrenchments on the right, which were attacked on the ensuing day, and carried, after a feeble resistance, by the British left. Upon this the whole Burmese army broke and dispersed in the woods, leaving their artillery, ammunition, and stores of every description, to the victors.

71. The military strength of the Burmese was now effectually broken, and the British army continued its march, unopposed by any considerable military force, towards the capital. But here again sickness appeared in the most appalling shape; cholera, in its worst form, broke out among the troops; and on more than one occasion their advance was stopped by the absolute impossibility of finding food in the dense jungles or inhospitable swamps through which their march lay. Aware, however, of the importance of striking before the enemy had recovered from their consternation, Sir Archibald pressed forward in spite of these obstacles, and the spectacles of horror which their retreat everywhere presented; and as the Burmese

Government had no longer the means of resistance, they were obliged now in good earnest to propose terms of submission and accommodation. The country through which the army advanced towards the capital exhibited at every step melancholy proofs of the ravages of war, and the extent of the misery which it had brought upon the wretched inhabitants. For fifty miles up the river, and all along the road by which the enemy had retired, the ground was strewed with dead bodies; all the villages were burned or in ruins; room could scarcely be found for pitching the tents without removing the corpses with which the ground was encumbered; and in many places a dog, stretched on a newly-made grave, faithfully repelled the efforts of the voracious of his tribe to violate the sepulchre, and mangle the much-loved remains. These scenes of horror both depressed the spirits and augmented the sickness of the British army; and as the expected co-operation from the side of Arracan had not taken place, Sir Archibald's position was by no means free from anxiety. It was with much satisfaction, therefore, that, on the 29th December, when at Patanagoh, on the left bank of the Irrawaddy, opposite Melloon, on the way to the Burmese capital, the British general received proposals of peace from the Burmese Government, and they were soon reduced to a formal treaty, which was signed by the British plenipotentiaries on the 2d January 1826, and the Burmese on the 3d.

72. It was with reason supposed in both armies that the contest was now terminated; but the overweening self-confidence of the Burmese, and the intelligence they received of Campbell's not having been joined, as he expected, by the troops from Arracan, induced them once more to try the fate of arms. The pretext taken for breaking off the treaty before it had been ratified by the King, was a refusal on the part of the British to retreat to Prome unless the Burmese retired to Ava. Hostilities in consequence were resumed, and ten thousand Burmese were assembled in the in-

trenched camp of Melloon, on the opposite side of the Irrawaddy, covering the approach to the capital. Eight-and-twenty guns were speedily placed in battery by the British on the morning of the 19th, and the troops embarked in boats and advanced to the assault. Three brigades were to land above the stockade and attack its northern face, one under Colonel Sale to disembark below it and assail its south-west angle. The troops in the latter, under Colonel Sale and Major Frith, landed before the others could get forward, and rushing up, carried the works alone, though defended by ten thousand men, with all their artillery and stores. Immediately after this success, the whole advanced, and were met by commissioners empowered to treat for peace. As the Burmese, however, were evidently adopting their old policy of negotiating to gain time, the British army continued to advance, the enemy retreating before them; and on the 9th of February the whole Burmese force, reinforced by some thousand choice troops styled "Retrievers of the King's glory," and now mustering eighteen thousand strong, under Nawung Thuring, or the Prince of Sunset, was attacked by eighteen hundred British under Sir Archibald Campbell. The enemy were drawn up in front of the town of Pagaham in the form of a semicircle, with their guns all bearing on the great road leading through their centre, by which it was thought the assailants would advance. But Campbell wisely declined that mode of combat, and made his attack instead by both flanks, which were comparatively undefended; he himself, at the head of the 13th and 89th, with a detachment of the Governor-General's body-guard, directing the right attack; while General Cotton commanded the left, composed of the 38th and 41st, with some Madras artillery. After a short conflict, the enemy, though immensely superior in numbers, gave way on both flanks, and rushed to a field-work in the centre, which was speedily stormed, with great slaughter, by the 38th. As a last effort, the

Burmese general pushed forward a column on the great road in the centre, in hopes of piercing it, and separating the British wings; but it was met by the 89th, and forced to retreat. The enemy now fled on all sides, leaving their whole artillery, stores, and ammunition, which fell into the hands of the victors.

73. After this decisive victory, nothing remained to the Burmese but submission to any terms which the victor chose to dictate. The British general, accordingly, was met when in full march for the capital, and only forty miles distant from it, by Mr Price and Mr Sandford, two Americans in the service of the Burmese Government, and who were described "as the only persons they could trust," who announced the acceptance by the court of Ava of the terms insisted for by the British general. They agreed to cede the whole conquered provinces of Arracan, comprising Arracan Proper, Ramree, Cheduba, and Sandoway; and the Arracan Mountains were to form the boundary on that side between the two empires. They ceded besides the province of Yeh, Tavoy, Mergui, and Tenasscrim, with the islands and dependencies connected with them, rendering the Saloun river the frontier in that quarter; and gave up all claim to Assam and Cachar. In addition to this, the Burmese agreed to pay a crore of rupees (£1,000,000) towards the expenses of the war; one quarter immediately, upon receipt of which the British army was to retire to Rangoon; another quarter in a hundred days, on getting which the army was to quit the dominions of the King of Ava, with the exception of the ceded provinces; the third in a year, and the last in two years from the conclusion of the treaty. Thus, by the vigour and perseverance of the British generals, and the heroic valour of their troops, was this perilous war brought to a successful and glorious termination; the prestige of British invincibility, which had been violently shaken by the disasters at its commencement, completely re-established; and a well-defined and defensible frontier, formed

by a range of lofty mountains, established on what had previously been the weakest side of our dominions. It was high time it should be so, for the crisis through which our empire passed during this war was of the most dangerous kind. Had the disasters which befell it at the commencement of hostilities continued much longer, and not been redeemed by heroic acts of valour in circumstances almost desperate on the part of the troops employed, all India would have been in a blaze, and insurrections would have broken out from one end of the peninsula to the other.

74. In the whole annals of the British empire a more remarkable contrast is not to be found than is presented by the Pindarree and Mahratta wars undertaken by Marquess Hastings, and the Burmese by Lord Amherst. In the first, forces amounting to above 200,000 men were to be faced, and a confederacy embracing the whole of central India, the most warlike part of the peninsula, confronted. Yet such was the vigour of execution and sagacity of previous foresight and preparation, that this great alliance was broken in pieces before its forces could be assembled together, and success, as in a game of chess, was, from the very beginning, certain, from the first move having been so rapidly made that it proved successful. In the next war the inherent vice of the Anglo-Saxon character appeared in strange contrast: Athelstane "the Unready" was well-nigh unhorsed by the first blows. The enemy to be encountered was not a tenth part as formidable; the Court of Ava could never bring above 20,000 men into the field; but, nevertheless, serious disasters were incurred. Inadequacy of the force at first employed, want of previous preparation and acquaintance with the country, an undue contempt for the enemy, and ignorance of his mode of fighting, were the causes of all these misfortunes. It was attempted to conquer the kingdom of Ava, one of the most warlike and determined in Asia, and possessing immense natural advantages from the thick woods with which the country is overspread, and the pestilential

marshes with which it is beset, with 11,000 men landed at the mouth of the Irrawaddy, at the commencement of the most unhealthy period of the year! Disaster, rather from sickness than the sword, fearful and long-continued, necessarily followed such an attempt. But if the commencement of the war exhibited the weak, its prosecution and conclusion revealed the strong, side of the Anglo-Saxon character. When the danger was revealed, and the serious nature of the contest stood apparent, neither vacillation nor timidity appeared in the British councils, any more than weakness or irresolution in the British arms. Reinforcements were poured in; adequate efforts were made; the exertions of Government were admirably seconded by the skill and valour of the officers, soldiers, and sailors employed; and the result was, that victory was again chained to the British standards, and a contest, which at first foreboded nothing but ruin to its arms, terminated by establishing the British empire on a more solid foundation than it had ever yet rested upon.

75. The Burmese war, as all contests are which prove at first unfortunate, and are attended with heavy expense, was, during its continuance, extremely unpopular in England; and even after its successful termination, the same apprehensions continued—dread of the effects of an undue extension of our empire coming in place of the dread of the immediate defeat of our arms. But upon a calm retrospect of the circumstances under which the war arose, and the subsequent history of our Indian empire, it must be evident that the contest was unavoidable, and that the only faults justly imputable to the Government were want of preparation on their own side, and ignorance of the enemy with whom they had to contend. It may be very true that the islands about which the war began were barren sandbanks, not worth a week's expenditure of the hostilities—that is wholly immaterial, in an empire resting on opinion, in considering whether the war could or

could not have been avoided. A lash over the back will probably not seriously injure a gentleman, so far as his physical frame is concerned: but how will his character stand if he submits, without resenting it, to such an insult? The little island about which the dispute arose might be valueless; but character is inestimable; and in the affairs of nations, not less than of individuals, he who submits to aggression, or declines to vindicate honour in small matters, will soon find himself involved at a disadvantage in disputes vital to his existence.

76. The good effect of the successes in the Burmese war soon appeared in the diplomatic relations of the British Government with the Eastern potentates. On 26th July 1826, a treaty of commerce and amity was concluded on very advantageous terms with the King of Siam, whose dominions, hitherto impervious, were opened to British commerce. This event, in itself not immaterial, was rendered doubly important from the satisfaction it gave the merchants and manufacturers of Great Britain, and the stop it put to the senseless clamour raised by ignorant and misled persons against any contests tending to the extension of our empire in the East.

77. An event of a very painful character occurred in the commencement of the Burmese war, which proved the precarious foundation on which our Indian empire rested, and the necessity of "conquest to existence," as strongly felt there as by the French Revolutionists or Napoleon in Europe. In September 1824, a dispute arose between the 47th native infantry stationed at Barrackpore and the Government, about the party which was bound to be at the expense of providing bullocks to carry the extra baggage of the sepoys who had been ordered to prepare to march into the Burmese territories. These bullocks had hitherto been always provided at the expense of the sepoys themselves, being in general got in great abundance, and at a small cost, in the country in which they had hitherto been accus-

tomed to carry on war. On this occasion, however, as they were going into a distant and unknown region, the price of these bullocks rose to an extravagant height, and the sepoys maintained, not without reason, that for this extra expense at least they should be reimbursed by the Government. This was imprudently, and, in the circumstances, unjustly refused by the commissariat, which held itself bound by former usage in this particular. Colonel Cartwright, who commanded the regiment, supplied funds from his private fortune to buy the bullocks; and Government, being informed of the circumstance, at length agreed to issue a sum of money to aid in the purchase. These tardy concessions, however, arrived too late to extinguish the spirit of discontent which from this cause and the general unpopularity of the Burmese war from its being carried on beyond the sea, had seized a large part of the native troops. The men were ordered to parade on the 30th October in marching order, but they refused to obey, and declared they would not go to Rangoon or elsewhere by sea, or march at all by land unless they had double *batta* or marching allowance. Two regiments besides the 47th were ascertained to share these sentiments.

78. Matters had now reached such a point that the speedy suppression of the revolt was indispensable, at whatever cost of life; for the concessions demanded by justice, if now made, would have been ascribed all over India to fear, and given a fatal blow to the moral ascendancy of Great Britain. In this crisis the conduct of the military chiefs was vigorous and decided. Sir Edward Paget, so famed in the Peninsular wars, arrived from Calcutta, accompanied by the 1st royals, 47th regiment, a battery of light artillery, and a part of the Governor-General's body-guard. The forces intended to act against the mutineers both in front and rear having taken their ground, the latter were informed that their fate would depend on their obedience to the order they

were now to receive. The command was to "order arms," which was instantly obeyed; but to the next, "ground arms," a few only yielded obedience. Upon this, on a signal given, the guns in the rear opened with grape, and a few discharges dispersed the mutineers, who were hotly pursued by the dragoons, a few cut down, but great numbers taken, of whom three were executed, and several sentenced to hard labour in irons for various terms. The 47th regiment was erased from the Army List, and the European officers were transferred to the other regiments. Thus terminated this dangerous mutiny, in which, while it is impossible not to admire the courage and resolution with which the danger was at last met, it is to be regretted that the disaffected had, in the outset at least, too good ground for complaint.*

79. This mutiny evinces the extreme importance of attending with sedulous care to the physical comforts and just complaints of the troops, as the previous one at Vellore did the peril of violating in any degree, however slight, their religious prejudices. All authorities concur in stating that the sepoys are in general docile and submissive, sober, diligent, observant of their offi-

* In all popular movements of this description, the points upon which the parties come into collision are but a part of, and often different from, those which have really occasioned the discontent. The grievances assigned by the mutineers in their memorial to

being ship; and, 2d, The unjust influence of the havildar major in the promotion of the non-commissioned officers in the battalion. The original ground of complaint, which was too well founded in the circumstances, based upon their having been obliged to provide bullocks themselves for transporting their baggage, had been removed by draught animals having been furnished by the Government before the mutiny actually broke out, but not before the discontent originally produced by that cause had reached an ungovernable height. It was the aversion of the native troops to engage in the Burmese war, clothed in their eyes with imaginary terrors, and especially to embarking on board ship for Rangoon, against which they entertained a superstitious horror, which was the real cause of the disorders.—See Commons' Report, April 1832, Q. 2151, 2152.

cers, and extremely attached to them when well treated. "No one," says Captain Grant Duff, "who has not witnessed it, could believe how much an officer who understands them can attach the sepoys. They discern the character of an officer even more correctly than European privates, are more disposed than they are to be pleased with his endeavours for their comfort; they even bear to be treated with more kindness and familiarity; but strictness on duty, patiently hearing their regular complaints, and dealing out even-handed justice, are the surest means of securing their respect and attachment." "The sepoys," says Sir Thomas Reynell, "are subordinate; they are patient, and they are obedient to their officers. They are in general well satisfied with their condition, well affected to the service, extremely orderly, and easy of management. Their attachment to their officers is great, if they deserve it. There is no greater punishment you can inflict on a sepoy than to order him to be discharged." With a soldiery of this description government is easy, provided they are justly dealt with, and the religious feelings in which they have been nurtured are duly respected. Mutiny will never rise to a serious height with such men, unless their rulers were in the outset at least in the wrong, into whatever excesses insubordination may afterwards lead those engaged in revolt. But persistence in material injustice, or violating religious feelings, may provoke a spirit which nothing can resist, and which may any day overturn an empire which no external force is able to subdue.*

80. Simultaneously with the war in Ava, an event of great importance occurred in the interior of India, which tested in a decisive way the military strength and resources of the Company's government. This was a contest with the state of Bhurtpore, which originated in a dispute concerning the successor of the rajah, who

* This was written in 1855, before the great sepoy revolt, and is purposely left as it stood at that period.

died in August 1823 without issue. The succession was claimed by Buldeo Singh, a brother of the deceased rajah, who got possession, and Doorjun Saul, the son of a younger brother, who claimed as having been adopted by the deceased ruler. The first was recognised by and received investiture from the British Government, but they hesitated to acknowledge his son as heir, though Sir D. Ochterlony, the Resident, urged them to do so. Sir David, however, deeming himself authorised by some general expressions in the Governor-General's despatches, gave investiture to the heir, who was a minor, early in February 1825, and on the 26th of the same month his father died. Upon this Doorjun Saul, the young rajah's cousin, collected some troops, and, notwithstanding the recognition of the title of that prince by the British Government, attacked and took Bhurtpore, murdered the infant prince's uncle, and seized the youthful sovereign. Upon this Sir D. Ochterlony, of his own authority, collected as large a force as he possibly could, with a powerful train of artillery, and advanced towards Bhurtpore, in order to vindicate by force the claim of the prince whom the British Government had recognised. These proceedings on the part of Ochterlony were strongly disapproved of by the Governor in council, as tending to induce another war, when the resources of the empire were already strained to the uttermost to maintain that with the Court of Ava, and he gave orders for suspending the march of the troops which had been directed by Ochterlony towards Bhurtpore; and as Doorjun Saul had renounced his intention of usurping the throne, he ordered the men to return to their cantonments. Sir David, however, entertained serious doubts of the sincerity of these protestations, and deeming the honour of Great Britain implicated in the immediate assertion of its supremacy, he solicited and received leave to retire. Such was the mortification he experienced from these events that it hastened his death. His last words, as he

turned his face to the wall, were, "I die disgraced." *

81. However much inclined the Indian Government may have been to avoid a rupture with the Rajah of Bhurtpore, and however harsh their conduct towards Sir D. Ochterlony, an officer to whom they owed so much, the sequel of events was not long in proving that the latter had been right in his anticipations, and that a war with the usurper of Bhurtpore could not be averted if the British ascendancy in northern India was any longer to be maintained. After great procrastination and indecision, betraying the extreme reluctance of the Government to come to a rupture, they at length determined to recognise the title of the young prince, Bulwunt Singh, and to insist on the expulsion of Doorjun Saul from the Bhurtpore state. They thus involuntarily were forced to recognise the justice of Sir David Ochterlony's views on this disputed subject, and drawn into a contest which a prompt support of his vigorous and manly policy would have probably prevented, by inducing submission on the part of the usurping rajah. Now, however, it was not so easy a matter to effect the object; for, during the long period of the Gover-

* In justice alike to the British Government and Sir D. Ochterlony, it must be added that they were not slow upon his death to recognise his great merits, both as a soldier and a diplomatist. In a general order, issued by the Governor-General on his death, it was stated, with truth and feeling, "With the name of Sir D. Ochterlony are associated many of the proudest recollections of the Bengal army, and to the renown of splendid achievements he added, by the attainment of the highest military honours of the Bath, the singular felicity of opening to his gallant companions an access to those tokens of royal favour which are the dearest objects of a soldier's ambition. The diplomatic talents of Sir D. Ochterlony were not less conspicuous than his military qualifications. To an admirably vigorous intellect and consummate address, he united the essential requisites of an intimate knowledge of the native character, language, and manners. The confidence which the Government reposed in an individual gifted with such rare endowments, was evinced by the high and responsible situations he successively filled, and the duties of which he discharged with eminent ability and advantage to the public interest."—THORNTON, v. 135 (note).

nor-General's indecision, the defences of Bhurtpore had been greatly strengthened, and the discontented had flocked to it from all parts of Hindostan, as the last but impregnable bulwark against the British power. This last opinion had very generally prevailed in India ever since the memorable repulse of the British assault at the close of the Mahratta war, recorded in a former work; and it had acquired so great a moral influence that it had become indispensable, at all hazards, to undeceive the nation on the subject. Even the Governor-General, in direct opposition to his former asseverations to Sir D. Ochterlony, was now obliged to admit this in an official document. "The right of Rajah Bulwunt Singh," said Sir Charles Metcalfe, the new Resident at Delhi, in a letter to the Governor-General, "is unquestioned and unquestionable; and it seems wonderful that, with so bad a cause, Doorjun Saul should be able to think of opposition to a predominant power, which seeks only to render justice to the lawful prince. But notwithstanding the injustice of the usurpation, which every one admits, he will probably receive support, from the circumstance of his placing himself in opposition to the British Government as the defender of Bhurtpore. It must be known to the right honourable the Governor in council that this fortress is considered throughout India as an insuperable check to our power, and the person who undertakes to hold it against us will be encouraged in his venture by its former successful defence, and by the goodwill of all who dislike our ascendancy, whatever may be the injustice of the cause."

82. The determination of the British Government being thus in the end taken, a proclamation was on 25th November issued by Sir Charles Metcalfe, denouncing the usurpation of Doorjun Saul, and declaring the intention of the Governor-General to support the pretensions of the youthful and rightful prince. The preparations made were immense, and suited to the magnitude of the enterprise undertaken, upon the success of which

it was felt that not merely the moral influence of the British in India, but the maintenance of their dominion in it, was dependent. LORD COMBERMERE, formerly Sir Stapleton Cotton, so well known as a gallant and successful cavalry officer under Wellington in Spain, who had succeeded Sir Edward Paget as commander-in-chief in India, took the command in person of the force advancing against Bhurtpore, which consisted of 21,000 men, including two European regiments of cavalry and two of infantry, with an immense train of 100 pieces of siege artillery, which extended on the line of march, with the reserve parks, to fifteen miles. On approaching Bhurtpore with this formidable force, Lord Combermere, with great humanity, addressed two several communications to Doorjun Saul, offering a safe conduct and safe passage through his camp to the whole women and children in the fortress, which the rajah declined, actuated by the Oriental jealousy of any interference with women, and dreading the same duplicity in his enemies of which he was conscious in himself.

83. The former siege, unsuccessfully undertaken by Lord Lake, had demonstrated that the strength of Bhurtpore consisted mainly in its mud walls of tenacious clay, which neither splintered nor crumbled under the stroke of the bullet, and in which missiles of the heaviest description sank without any serious injury to the works. So formidable had these difficulties been, that repeated assaults of the British had been repulsed with extraordinary loss from the fire of the defences not having been silenced, and the breaches not sufficiently cleared when the attacks were made. So elated had the natives been with this successful defence, that they built a bastion, which they called the "Bastion of Victory," and which they vauntingly declared was formed of the blood and bones of Englishmen. The garrison now consisted of 20,000 men, and 146 guns were mounted on the ramparts. The numbers of the enemy, great as they were, proved less formidable than their spirit, for they were composed of Raj-

poots and Affghans, the most warlike and courageous in India, and they were fully convinced that their fortress would prove impregnable, as it had withstood the assaults of Lord Lake. The siege was looked to with the most intense interest from every part of India, not only from the great amount of treasure which had been brought there as a secure place of deposit from every part of the country, but from the belief generally entertained that it was never destined to be taken, and that against its ramparts the tide of British invasion would beat in vain.

84. Notwithstanding the warning given by the former siege, it was determined to proceed by the ordinary method of approaches by sap, and finally breaching the rampart from the edge of the counterscarp. A sally of 200 horse having been repulsed with heavy loss on the 27th December, and the trenches armed, the advanced batteries opened on the 28th December against the north-east angle of the place, and by the 4th January 1826 they had produced a visible effect, though so inconsiderable as to suggest doubts with regard to the chances of success by that mode of attack. Fortunately, the commander-in-chief now adopted the suggestions of Major-General Galloway, an officer of great talent and experience in the warfare against mud forts, and Lieutenant Forbes of the Engineers, a young officer of uncommon energy and genius,* and resolved to

* Lieut. William Forbes of the Bengal Engineers, whose great skill in the conduct of the mines was of such service in the siege of Bhurtpore, was the fifth son of John Forbes, Esq. of Blackford in Aberdeenshire, and a lineal descendant by his mother, Miss Gregory, of the eminent James Gregory, the discoverer of the Gregorian telescope and of fluxions at the same time with Leibnitz and Sir Isaac Newton. He inherited all the mechanical and mathematical genius of his ancestor, and having embraced the profession of arms in India, his talents procured for him at Addiscombe an engineer's appointment, and caused him to be intrusted when he went to the East with the construction, and subsequently with the government, of the mint at Calcutta. The Author has a melancholy pleasure in bearing ~~his~~ testimony to the talents and worth of a highly esteemed relative and early friend, now, like so many others, fallen a victim to the climate of India.

prosecute the siege by means of mines. Under the direction of Brigadier Amburey and Lieut. Forbes, the communication between the wet ditches of the fortress and the tank from which they were supplied was cut off, and the moat having been rendered nearly dry, mines were run under it, and one sprung early on the morning of the 7th, though without much effect. A second attempt was made with no better success, the enemy having discovered what was going on, and countermined before any material progress had been made. On the same day an accidental shot from the ramparts set fire to a tumbril of the besiegers, exploded a magazine, and 20,000 pounds of powder were destroyed. Notwithstanding this disaster, the approaches of the besiegers steadily continued, and on the 16th two mines were exploded under one of the bastions with such effect that a large chasm was made in the rampart. To it accordingly the whole fire of the breaching batteries within reach was directed, and with such effect, that before nightfall on the 17th it as well as another breach were declared practicable, and daybreak on the following morning was appointed for the assault. The attack was to be made in two columns, one headed by General Nicolls with the 59th, another by General Reynell with the 14th. The explosion of a mine charged with 10,000 pounds of powder, which had been run under the north-eastern angle of the works, was to be the signal for the assault.

85. At eight on the morning of the 18th the mine was sprung, and with terrific effect. The whole of the salient angle, and part of the stone cavalier in the rear, were lifted in a mass into the air, and fell again with a frightful crash, which caused the earth to quake for miles around, while the air was involved in total darkness from the prodigious volumes of stones and dust which were thrown up as from the crater of a volcano in every direction. Owing to the violence of the explosion, and its having burst in some degree in an unexpected direction, several of the leading files in the front of

the stormers were killed or wounded by the fall of the stones, a momentary pause took place in the advance, and Lord Combermere himself, who was far forward, made a narrow escape with his life, two sepoy being killed only two feet in front of him. General Reynell, however, gave the word "Forward" to his column, and, putting himself at their head, the whole rushed forward over the ruins with such vigour that in a few minutes the right breach was carried amidst shouts from the whole army, which were heard above all the roar of the artillery. The left breach, which was attacked by General Nicolls, was more difficult of access, both from the slope being much steeper and the opening not so entire. Notwithstanding all their valour, the 59th regiment, which headed the storm, was obliged for a few minutes to pause near the summit, and a desperate hand-to-hand contest ensued with the enemy, who defended the pass with unconquerable resolution. At length, as the explosion of the mine had swept away three hundred of the defenders, and a loud cheer from the rear encouraged the assailants, a sudden rush was made and the breach was carried. The besieged, however, retreated slowly along the ramparts, and turned every gun to which they came on the pursuers; but the latter charged on with invincible vigour, upset or spiked the guns as they were successively carried, and at length, amidst loud cheers, united with General Reynell's division above the Kombhur gate. Bhurtpore was taken; the bulwark of Hindostan had fallen; Lord Lake's memory was revenged, and the halo of invincibility had again settled round the brows of the victors.

86. The immediate consequences of this victory were as decisive as the triumph itself. The citadel surrendered early in the afternoon of the same day; and Doorjun Saul, who at the head of a hundred and sixty chosen horse had attempted to force his way through the besiegers' lines, was intercepted by the able dispositions of General Sleigh, who commanded the

cavalry, and made prisoner. All the other fortresses in the state of Bhurt-pore immediately surrendered, and the young rajah, the rightful heir, was seated on the throne, though under the protection of a British resident, in whom the powers of government were substantially vested. The fortifications were immediately destroyed, the principal bastions blown up, and part of the curtain demolished. Among them was the "Bastion of Victory," built, as they boasted, of the blood and bones of the English soldiers; and this was done by some of the very men who had been engaged in the former siege. These successes were not gained without a considerable loss to the victors, of whom 600 fell in the assault; but this was little compared to the carnage among the besieged, of whom 4000 were lost on that disastrous day. Lord Combermere was deservedly made a viscount for his able conduct of this brilliant siege, and Lord Amherst had recently before been advanced a step in the peerage.

87. The only other event of general

importance which occurred during Lord Amherst's administration was the acquisition of Malacca, Singapore, and the Dutch possessions on the continent of India, which in 1824 were ceded to the British Government by the King of the Netherlands, in exchange for the British settlement of Bencoolen, in the island of Sumatra. The situation of Singapore at the entrance of the Straits of Malacca, eminently favourable for commerce, had led to an English factory being established there before it was formally ceded to our Government; and as soon as this was done, a treaty was concluded with the native princes, which further facilitated our growing commercial intercourse with these distant eastern regions. In December 1826 a treaty with the Rajah of Nagpore was also concluded, eminently favourable to British influence in India. Lord Amherst returned to England in March 1828, and was succeeded *ad interim* by Mr Butterworth Bayley, the senior member of the Council, in the duties of government.

CHAPTER XLVII.

INDIA, FROM THE FALL OF BHURTPORE IN 1826 TO THE TAKING OF CABUL IN 1839.

1. THE Burmese war and the capture of Bhurt-pore were to our Indian empire what the Peninsular contest and battle of Waterloo were to our European. Both these wars were very protracted, attended with a great expense, and for long of doubtful issue. Both terminated in the establishment of the British power, the one in Europe, the other in Asia, on a solid foundation, and in throwing around it the halo of invincibility, even more efficacious than physical strength in securing the safety and procuring the blessings of peace for nations. Un-

fortunately, they both led to another result, the natural consequence with short-sighted mortals of the former, and as powerful a cause in inducing danger as that is in averting it. This was a belief that external danger had for ever passed away; that the victories gained had rendered future peril impossible; and that the nation, alike in the East and West, might now with safety repose on its laurels, and reap in peace, under a very reduced expenditure, the fruits of the toils and the dangers of war. How far this delusion proceeded in Great Britain, what a lamentable

prostration of national strength it occasioned, and what enormous perils it induced, has been fully explained in the former chapter, and will still more appear in the sequel of this work. But the mania of retrenchment was not less powerful with the Indian Government than with the nation and its rulers at home; and as the former was more in presence of danger, and was not encircled with the ocean, which has so often rescued the parent State from the perils induced by its folly, the catastrophe came sooner, and was of a more alarming character, in the East than in the West. The thirteen years of peace which followed the taking of Bhurtpore, were nothing but a long preparation for the Affghanistan disaster in India, as the thirty-nine years' peace which followed the battle of Waterloo in Europe, was for the perils which were averted from the nation only by the heroic valour of her sons in the Crimea, and during the Indian revolt.

2. In justice to the Indian Government, it must be added that they had much need of retrenchment, for the cost of the preceding wars had been enormous, and brought the finances of the empire into an alarming state. The war with Ava in particular, combined as it was in its later stages with that of Bhurtpore, had been attended with a very heavy expense. In the two years of 1824 and 1825, no less than £19,000,000 had been raised by loans; and at the close of the Amherst administration the financial prospects of the country were of a most alarming complexion. A deficit of £1,500,000 existed in the yearly exchequer, and it had then been found, what subsequent experience has too fatally verified, that any attempt to raise the revenue, whether direct or indirect, by augmenting the rate of taxation, not only would be vain, but, by ruining the cultivators, would prove eminently prejudicial. In the Madras presidency in particular, where the "Perpetual Settlement" did not exist, and the Ryotwar system admitted of attempts, by exacting increased rents for the land, to augment the public

revenue, the ruin induced upon the cultivators had been such as to cause it to decline in the most alarming manner. Something, therefore, absolutely required to be done, to bring the income and expenditure of the empire nearer to an equality; and it appeared to the Government, that as it had been found to be impossible to augment the former, nothing remained but as much as possible to diminish the latter.

3. Unfortunately for India, there was a third method of remedying the financial difficulties of the country, which it did not enter into the contemplation either of the Government at home or that in India to adopt, probably because it threatened some interests at home, or required an increased expenditure in the first instance abroad; and that was, to increase the capacity of India to bear an enlarged expenditure, by augmenting the resources of its industry. To do this, however, required the opening of the English market to the produce of Indian industry on the liberal terms of entire reciprocity, and a considerable expenditure on canals and irrigation in India—the first of which thwarted the jealous commercial spirit of Great Britain, while the last ran directly counter to the economical spirit which at that time was so prevalent both with the India Directors and the British Government. No relaxation of our prohibitory protection code, even in favour of our own subjects in Hindostan, was then thought of; and to such a length did this system go in blighting the native industry in India, that it was stated some years after in Parliament, by one of the ablest and best informed men who ever returned from that country, Mr Cutlar Ferguson: "I will take this opportunity of expressing a hope that, while such active exertions are made to extend the manufactures of England, we should also do something for the manufactures of India. At present, our cottons and woollens are admitted into India on payment of a duty of 2½ per cent, while at the same time a duty of 10 per cent is charged upon the manu-

factures of India imported into Great Britain. A few years ago, in Dacca alone, 50,000 families obtained the means of subsistence by the cotton manufactures; but from the commercial policy this country has pursued with regard to India, *not one-tenth of the number are now employed in this branch of industry.* I trust this system will soon be abandoned, and that articles produced by the natives of India will be admitted into England on payment of a small duty." Such was the effect in the East of the system so much vaunted in this country, whereby the manufacturers of Manchester and Glasgow were able to undersell the weavers of Hindostan in the manufacture of an article which grew on the banks of the Ganges.

4. Government having decided upon the diminution of expenditure, not the increase of the productive powers of native industry, the most peremptory orders were sent out with the Governor-General who succeeded Lord Amherst, LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK. The character of this nobleman, and the circumstances under which he assumed the reins of power, were singularly favourable to the full development, for good or for evil, of the economising policy. He obtained his appointment in consequence of the connection of Mr Canning with the Portland family, of which he was a younger son; and he left England at a time when economy was the order of the day with all parties, and every successive ministry was striving to outbid its predecessor in the race for popularity, by reductions in the national armaments and consequent relaxation of taxation. His personal character and ruling principles were eminently calculated to give effect to these maxims of Government in the boundless empire over which his rule extended. A "Liberal," as he himself said, "to the very core," he had in the close of the war brought the Government into no small embarrassment, when in command in the Mediterranean, by an imprudent and unauthorised proclamation to the Geno-

ese, in which he promised them the restoration of their ancient independent form of government. Without the powerful mind which discerns the truth through all the mists with which popular passion and prejudice so often envelop it, he had respectable abilities, and a great facility in embracing and carrying out the leading principles of the day. His heart was in the right place. His intentions were always good, his views benevolent, his aspirations after an increase of human felicity; and yet he did more than any one else to endanger our Eastern dominions, and in the end brought unnumbered misfortunes upon it. Such is too often the result of inconsiderate or ill-informed benevolence. "Hell is paved with good intentions." Yet are these disastrous consequences not to be ascribed entirely, or even chiefly, to Lord William Bentinck, as an individual; they were the result of the faults of the age, of the opinions of which he was the exponent and instrument rather than the director.

5. The new Governor-General arrived at Calcutta in July 1828, and his very first acts gave an earnest of what was to be the tone of his administration. For above thirty years past, ever since 1796, a dispute had subsisted between the Government at home and the native army in India, called the *half-batta question*. The payment was not of any great amount—not exceeding £20,000 a-year—but several peremptory regulations on the subject had been sent out by the Court of Directors, which had been evaded by successive governors-general, better acquainted than the rulers at home with the wants of, and the necessity of propitiating, the army. Now, however, they had found a Governor-General prepared to carry out their projects of economy to their full extent; and on 29th November 1828, they were promulgated by general orders from the Governor-General, and became law in India. The dangerous consequences of this unhappy reduction were clearly perceived at the time by those best acquainted

with the country: Sir Charles Metcalfe and Mr Butterworth Bayley, the members of the Council, regarded it with undisguised apprehension; and the resignation by Lord Combermere of the situation of commander-in-chief, which he had held only four years, was mainly owing to his aversion to the same change. Even Lord W. Bentinck himself in the end came to be convinced of its inexpediency, for in a minute recorded by him in August 1834, he thus adverted to it: "Trifling as this deduction is upon the aggregate amount of the pay of the Bengal army, it has been severely felt by the few upon whom it has fallen, and has created in all an alarm of uncertainty as to their future condition, which has produced more discontent than the measure itself." But all this notwithstanding, the measure was carried into execution, and produced an amount of irritation and discontent in our Indian army, which might have seriously, and for a mere trifle, endangered the existence of our Eastern empire, if its effects had not been neutralised, as the faults of persons in authority so often are in this country, by the virtue and patriotic spirit of the subordinate officers suffering by the change.

6. This innovation was the harbinger of others of still greater importance in a pecuniary point of view, though not so perilous from the irritation with which they were attended. A "rule of service," as it was called, was introduced into the civil departments, by which, as was most reasonable, the remuneration of the servants was to be regulated in some degree by the time during which they had performed their duties. There can be no doubt that a considerable number of the civil servants in India enjoy large salaries; but they cannot be considered as excessive if the unhealthiness of the climate to European constitutions, and the banishment imposed upon them for a large, and the best period of their lives, is taken into consideration. This change of Lord W. Bentinck's must be considered as just and salutary,

because it tended to make the remuneration of civil servants depend in some degree on the length of their services in the employment of the State. But the same cannot be said of another regulation, by which every superior officer, court, and board, was required to make periodical reports on the character and conduct of every person in the employment of the Company—a practice which, as tending to establish a universal system of espionage, was generally disliked and soon abolished. Equally questionable was a regulation he made shortly before leaving India, whereby corporal punishment was wholly abolished in the Indian army. That it would be a most desirable thing, if practicable, to get quit of this degrading and inhuman punishment in an honourable profession, is indeed certain, and probably the high social position of the sepoy renders dismissal from the service a punishment extremely dreaded, and which in pacific quarters may enable commanding officers in a great measure to dispense with the lash. But in actual war, and in presence of the enemy, when imprisonment is impossible, and dismissal would only weaken the force, no other punishment will ever be found either practicable or efficacious; and at all events, it was to the last degree impolitic to abolish a punishment in the native ranks which was, and is still retained, though happily under great restrictions, for the troops of Great Britain.

7. But all other measures of Lord W. Bentinck sink into insignificance when compared with the immense and wholesale reduction of the army, which went on during the whole time that he held the reins of power. So incessant and considerable was this reduction, that the native army in the employment of the Company, which in 1825 had been 246,125, had sunk in 1835 to only 152,938 men, without any increase whatever in the European troops in India, which in both periods were about 30,000.* This immense reduction, amounting to nearly 100,000 men

* See Chap. xli. § 25, note, where the numbers for each year are given.

in ten years, took place too when there was no diminution whatever in the dangers of the empire, or in the necessity for a large military establishment, but, on the contrary, a great increase in both from the vast extension of our empire, which daily brought it into contact with a wider circle. All such considerations, so overwhelming to the thinking few, so utterly disregarded by the unthinking many, were drowned in the senseless cry for economy and reduction at any cost, which at that period pervaded the people of Great Britain, and forced itself both upon the Government at home and the East India Company. It must be admitted that these prodigious and sweeping reductions did effect a very great diminution in the expenditure of India, insomuch that, instead of an annual deficit, which the periods of the Pindarree and Burmese wars had exhibited, a surplus was presented, which at the close of Lord W. Bentinck's administration in 1835 amounted to no less than £10,000,000 sterling. But at what price was this treasure accumulated? At the cost of the most imminent peril to the empire, soon to be shaken to its foundations by the Affghanistan disaster, and in the fields of the Punjab.

8. A circumstance peculiar to India tended very much to augment the dangers of this great reduction of the military force in that country, and that was the frequent abstraction of officers from the native regiments to fill diplomatic or other civil situations in the service of Government. Economy was the chief motive for this practice: the diplomatic servant was got at a less rate because he continued to enjoy his pay; and it was also thought in many cases that the vigour and decision of a man trained to military duties were more suitable to the semi-military duties of resident at the native courts, than the habits of civilians would be. But with whatever diplomatic advantages such a practice might be attended, nothing is more certain than that it was to the last degree prejudicial to the army. It not only deprived the officers so abstracted of a large part of

their military experience, but it rendered them strangers to their men. Neither had confidence in the other, because neither knew each other. That most essential element in military vigour and efficiency, *a thorough trust and confidence between officers and men*, was wanting, when those engaged in the diplomatic service only rejoined their regiments when hostilities actually broke out. To this cause, as much as to the great proportion of the native army which was composed of young soldiers when the war in Affghanistan and the Punjab broke out, the narrow escape from total ruin is mainly to be ascribed. And to the same cause is to be referred the fact so frequently observed in the later wars in India, that the sepoys were often not to be relied upon, and that they were very different from the veterans of Coote and Clive. They were so because they wanted the essential element of military power in all countries, but above all in Asia, that of a thorough acquaintance and confidence between officers and men.

9. When there is so much to lament in Lord William Bentinck's administration, it is consolatory to reflect that there are some particulars to which unqualified praise is due. The first of these is the abolition in the British dominions of the terrible practice of widows immolating themselves on the funeral-pile of their husbands, known by the name of *suttee*. This was effected under Lord William Bentinck's administration by a simple enactment declaring the practice illegal, and subjecting all concerned in aiding or abetting it to the pains of manslaughter. It had the immediate effect of putting an end to this atrocious custom, which has never since been practised, except by stealth, in the British dominions. Contrary to what was generally supposed, this blessed change was effected without shocking the religious feelings of the natives, or disturbance of any kind—a fact which demonstrates that this abominable practice had not its origin in the religious feelings of the country, but sprang from a different and much more impure source. It originated in the selfish cupidity of

the unhappy widow's relatives, who inherited her fortune when the sacrifice was consummated, and forced her to submit to it for their aggrandisement. It is to the lasting honour of the British Government, and Lord William Bentinck's administration, that they put an end to such frightful sacrifices, brought about for such base and selfish ends.

10. The other act of wise beneficence, or rather salutary justice, which distinguished Lord William Bentinck's administration, was the destruction of the destructive tribe of *Thugs*, or Phansi-gars, who had long infested some provinces of India. This sect of fanatics, whose principles and practices were such that they would pass for fabulous if not attested by contemporary and undoubted evidence, were for the most part thieves and murderers of hereditary descent, who, without industry, employment, or occupation, lived a wandering life, going about the country robbing unsuspecting victims, whom they immediately after murdered. With such dexterity were their assassinations effected, and so effectually was all trace of them concealed, that hundreds and thousands of unhappy persons perished every year under their hands, no one knew how, and were buried no one knew where. Distinguished by no mark or characteristic from the ordinary inhabitants of the country, they yet formed a fraternity apart, held together by secret signs, oaths, and terror, and whose principles were as fixed for the work of destruction as those of the freemasons are for that of charity. They made no use of daggers or poison in effecting their assassinations; a strip of cloth or an unfolded turban was sufficient to strangle their victim, who was immediately plundered and buried with surprising skill and celerity. The foundation of their creed was the fatal doctrine of necessity, of which they held themselves out as being the mere blind instruments. "Is any man killed by man's killing? Are we not instruments in the hands of God?" was their favourite argument. Having obtained information from some of

their number of the principal haunts and ramifications of this terrible society, Lord William Bentinck hunted them out, and ran them down without mercy. From the time when pursuit commenced in 1830, to 1835, above 2000 of them were seized and tried, and either executed, transported, or imprisoned at Indore, Hyderabad, Saugor, and Jubbulpoor. For a time the fanaticism of the sect, and the long impunity which their crimes had enjoyed, sustained them at the judgment-seat and on the scaffold. But at length, when many of the most notorious leaders had been tried and executed, their resolution gave way; numbers purchased a pardon by a full confession. Such as could effect it, sought safety in flight; and at length the confederacy was broken up, and the memory of it, like that of the Old Man of the Mountain in the Lebanon, will survive as one of the darkest and most incredible episodes in human history.

11. Another important change, possibly fraught with great consequences in future times, was the abolition of the forfeiture which formerly existed of civil rights on a proselyte's conversion to Christianity. This was considered a most perilous innovation in a country so subjugated by religious intolerance as Hindostan; but it was introduced with so much caution, and so judiciously worded, that it excited little or no commotion even when first introduced, and when it was most to be apprehended. Probably the professors and teachers of the ancient superstition deemed it so strongly rooted in the prejudices and feelings of the people, nursed by thousands of years' customs, that no danger was to be apprehended to it from any possible facility given to conversion to another and a purer faith. Perhaps, too, the number of creeds—Brahmin, Mussulman, Christian, Jews, Fire-worshippers, and Buddhists—which pervaded the country, had rendered the inhabitants indifferent to any attempt to introduce a new creed, and incapable of uniting together in any common measures to resist it. Toleration of other creeds,

provided their own is not interfered with, is the ruling principle in India, as it must be in all countries inhabited by the professors of many, and successively subjected to the dominion of all. Certain it is, that since these legal impediments have been removed, the progress of Christianity in India has not been materially increased, at least among the superior classes, and that the proselytes in the lower, of whom so much is said, are generally looked down upon by their compatriots, and too often enrolled under the banners of the Cross by poverty, necessity, or other motives than the influence of mental illumination. The reason is obvious; they are not fitted to receive it, and will not be so for ages to come. Christianity requires previous mental training, and will not root without it. Our Saviour was not sent into the world in the days of Pharaoh, but in those of Cæsar; and when He did appear, it was not in the extremities of civilisation, but in its centre, midway between the arts of Greece and the learning of Egypt, the wealth of Persia and the legions of Rome.

12. The administration of Lord William Bentinck being one of external peace, and of a strenuous endeavour to diminish the public expenditure and right the finances of the State, the political transactions of the period, though not without their importance in India, may be summarily dismissed in a work of general history. The most important of them, the deposition of the Rajah of Coorg, and the conversion of his mountainous principality into a province of the Madras presidency, was effected in April 1834. A domestic quarrel with his sister, for whom he entertained a criminal passion, and her husband, which led them to seek the protection of the British Government, and numerous acts of tyranny on his part towards his unfortunate subjects, formed the grounds for this invasion, which was better founded in his misgovernment than in any right of interference on our part. It took place on 6th April 1834, in four divisions, and encountered very little opposition, though the moun-

taineers were brave and determined, in consequence of the indisposition of the rajah to enter the lists with the powerful Company, which had long been the protector of his family. When possession was taken of his palace, ample evidence both of the determination and atrocity of his character was discovered. Piles of firewood were found in different parts of the building, apparently with the intention of setting it on fire; and the bodies of seventeen persons of both sexes, including three relatives of the rajah himself, were discovered in a pit in a jungle. Not a single male of the royal house, except the rajah, had been allowed to survive. His prime-minister, and the chief instigator of these atrocities, was found dead in a wood hanging from the branch of a tree. The deposed rajah became a pensioner on liberal terms of the East India Company, and some years ago came to this country, accompanied by an infant daughter, to whom Queen Victoria had the kindness to stand as godmother. She is educated in the Christian religion—the first link, in high rank, between the native princes and the faith destined one day to overspread the earth.

13. Political arrangements of some moment took place with Oude, Nagpore, Mysore, Jeypoor, and other small Indian states, which do not deserve a place in general, whatever they may do in Indian history. But an event of the deepest interest to the whole world occurred during this administration—one of the many, and not the least important effects which steam-navigation has bequeathed to the world. This was the opening of the “overland route,” as it is called, to India by the Mediterranean, Egypt, and the Red Sea, and the consequent reduction of the period of transit from four or five months to six weeks. So great an advantage in many respects has this change proved, that this has now become the general mode of transit for passengers to India, leaving the passage round the Cape of Good Hope chiefly for sailing vessels laden with cargoes. The first voyage between Suez and Bombay was made by the

Hugh Lindsay in 1830, and occupied thirty days. It is now usually done in fourteen or sixteen. The effects of this change have undoubtedly been to diminish to less than one-half the distance to India, and augment in a similar proportion the facility of sending troops and supplies to our Eastern dominions. The ease with which two splendid regiments of horse were sent in 1855 from India to the Crimea is a proof of this. Yet is this change not without its dangers, which may come in process of time to overbalance all its advantages. By reducing to nearly a third the time required for corresponding with Hindostan, it brought the country under the direct control first of the East India Company, and now of the House of Commons, to an extent which was impossible when the communication could be kept up only by a voyage of five or six months round the Cape. It has thus substituted the government of the many at home, necessarily imperfectly informed, for that of one on the spot, surrounded with all the means of accurate local knowledge. Whether this will eventually prove a change for the better, time will show; but certain it is that our Indian empire has never been in such peril as it has frequently been since it was introduced. And the experience of the Crimean campaign gives no countenance to the idea that a war-council or single will in Paris or London can be advantageously substituted for the unshackled directions of a despotic government or real commander-in-chief on the spot.

14. Lord William Bentinck quitted India in May 1835, and was succeeded by Sir Charles Metcalfe, the senior member of the Council in the government of Calcutta. The brief administration of this able and experienced public servant was signalised by a change which at first sight would seem to be of incalculable importance, but which in practice has not been attended by the vast results for good or for evil which might naturally have been anticipated from it. This was the entire removal of the restrictions on the press, which, although

seldom enforced, still existed in India. It is remarkable that these restrictions had applied only to Europeans; and accordingly, when Mr Silk Buckingham was removed from India some years before, on account of some intemperance in his published writings, his journal was continued by an Anglo-Indian, to whom the power of banishment did not apply. Now, however, all restrictions on the press, whether in the hands of Europeans or natives, were removed by Sir Charles Metcalfe, and the Indian press was rendered, and has ever since continued, as free as that of Great Britain.

15. It is a curious circumstance that Sir Charles Metcalfe, by whom, irrespective of any orders from the East India Company, and even in opposition to their wishes, this great change was introduced, had in 1825 deprecated it in the strongest terms, as tending to enable "the natives to throw off our yoke," and had in a recorded minute of Council in October 1830, expressed in sharp language the evils attendant on the proceedings of Government finding their way into the public newspapers. The vast alteration made between this period and 1835 in the frame of the monarchy, and the ruling influences at home, can alone account for so remarkable a change of opinion. Experience, however, has now proved that the innovation has by no means been attended with the dangerous consequences which were at first anticipated from it, and that Sir Charles Metcalfe's later opinion was the better founded of the two. Nothing can be more certain than that in an empire of such extent, ruled by foreigners, won and preserved by the sword, numerous abuses in every department must have sprung up, which can only be checked or exposed by a free and independent press. The melancholy fact, which recent times have brought to light, that, in spite of its warning voice, torture is still practised by the native tax-collectors under the English rule in several parts of India, is a sufficient proof of this. The reason why the freedom of the press, though attended with some inconvenience, has, hitherto

at least, been followed by no dangerous consequences is obvious. It exists in what, to the immense majority of the people, is a foreign and unknown language. Nothing is perilous, in the way of exciting commotion, but what is intelligible to the masses. The most violent political diatribes may be safely addressed to the people of Germany in English, or of England in French; and however much the demoralising effect of the licentious press of London may be dreaded, no man ever felt any fears from the publication of new editions in the British capital of the works in the original language of Ovid or Arctin.

16. Lord Heytesbury was appointed by Sir R. Peel, during his brief tenure of office in the spring of 1835, to succeed Lord William Bentinck. But before he had started for India the change of Ministry in favour of the Whigs took place, and they annulled the appointment, and substituted LORD AUCKLAND in his room, who forthwith proceeded to his destination, and held the office of Governor-General during the next six eventful years. The character of this nobleman, which was amiable and unambitious, seemed well calculated to carry out the pacific policy which the East India Company, with sincerity and earnestness, never fail to impress upon their viceroys. At the farewell banquet given to him by the Company, he said "that he looked with exultation to the new prospect opening before him, affording him an opportunity of doing good to his fellow-creatures, of promoting education and knowledge, of improving the administration of justice in India, of extending the blessings of good government and happiness to India." These were his genuine sentiments; all who heard the words felt that he was sincere. He had no taste for the din and confusion of a camp—no thirst for foreign conquest. Simple and unobtrusive in his manners, of a mild and unimpassioned temperament, of a gentle and retiring nature, he was as anxious to shun as others are to court notoriety. His only object was to pass his allotted span of government in measures of ex-

ternal peace and domestic improvement. Yet under his administration arose the most terrible war in which our Indian empire had ever been engaged; under his sway was sustained a disaster as great as the destruction of the legions of Varus! So much is man the creature of circumstances, and so little is the most strongly-marked individual disposition, or that of collective bodies of men, able to control the current of events, in which both, in public life, often find themselves irrecoverably involved.

17. The first important measure of Lord Auckland's administration was one little in accordance with these pacific professions, and the morality of which has excited much difference of opinion among the writers on Indian affairs. This was the deposition of the Rajah of Sattara, who had been placed on the throne of his ancestors by the East India Company itself in 1818, and had since governed his subjects, according to their own admission, with moderation and humanity, and engaged in the prosecution of public works of lasting utility. The charge made against him proceeded from a corrupt and vindictive brother, who accused him of the most extravagant designs against the British empire in India, and of having corresponded for a course of years with the Portuguese authorities in Goa, with a view to engage them in an alliance against the British Government, to recover for the rajah the Mahratta territories of which the confederacy had been deprived by Lord Hastings's victories. Extravagant as these projects were, they were distinctly proved to have been entertained by him; and as he was a prince of a weak intellect and very slender information, their absurdity was not so apparent to him as it would be to the worst informed European. More serious charges were brought against him of having been tampering with sepoy soldiers, and corresponding, in a way hostile to British interests, with the ex-rajah of Nagpore, a man of infamous character and well-known hatred to the Company's Government. The result was that Sir James Carnac, the

governor of Bombay, required him to sign an acknowledgment of his guilt, and he would be forgiven. He refused, and was deposed, and the government bestowed on his brother, who had given the information which led to his ruin. More important events, however, were now impending, and Great Britain became involved in negotiations and military operations of the highest importance, and which, in their final result, shook the British empire in the East to its foundations.

18. THE NORTH is the quarter from which, in every age, the independence of India has been seriously threatened, its plains ravaged, and its dynasties subverted. Twelve times within the limits of authentic and recorded history the Tartars have burst through the snowy barrier of the Himalaya, and descended upon the plains at their feet: the Macedonians in one age under Alexander, the Persians in another under Nadir Shah, have carried their victorious standards over northern India; and even the Affghans have often left their inhospitable mountains, and returned to them laden with the spoils and the trophies of Hindostan. More than half the modern inhabitants of India are the descendants of the savage warriors from beyond the Himalaya snows who in different ages have overspread its territories, and left permanent traces of their victories in the language, the religion, and the customs of their descendants. It is these repeated conquests from the north which is the chief cause of the inability at this time to resist the British power; for the country is inhabited by the descendants of successive conquerors so much at variance with each other, that they cannot now unite even for measures of mutual defence or the maintenance of their common independence. Till a new and more formidable enemy appeared on the ocean in the ships of England, India had never been conquered but from the north, and was ruled by the Mogul princes, the descendants of the chiefs of the last swarm of these dreaded Tartar conquerors.

19. Persia is the first and most pow-

erful barrier of Hindostan against the irruptions of these northern barbarians. No considerable army can enter India by land but through its territory; and the transit of the stony girdle of the globe which separates its lofty plains from Hindostan, difficult and dangerous at all times, is only practicable to the power which has subdued or is in alliance with Persia. Only two roads practicable for artillery or carriages are to be found in the vast snowy ridge, varying from 18,000 to 25,000 feet in height, which shuts in, over its whole northern frontier, the plains of Hindostan. All the Asiatic conquerors, accordingly, who have aspired to or effected the conquest of India, have commenced with the regions of Khorassan and reached that country either by the passage of the Bamian Pass, or that which leads from Herat to Candahar. The route pursued by Alexander from Babylon by Balkh, Cabul, and Attock, or that followed by Timur by Herat, Candahar, and Cabul, are those which all other armies have followed, and which to the end of the world must be pursued by those who are attracted in Asia from its cold and desolate upland plains by the wealth of Delhi, or the warmth and riches of the regions of the sun.

20. But Persia is not the only state which lies between India and the Asiatic barbarians who constantly threaten it from the north. After leaving the arid and lofty valleys of Khorassan, the traveller before he enters Hindostan, has to traverse for many a long and weary day the mountains of AFFGHANISTAN. This wild and mountainous region, part of the offshoots of the vast Himalaya range, is for the most part situated to the south of the crest of the ridge called the Hindoo-Koosh. It is a vast quadrangular mass of mountains, containing 5,000,000 of inhabitants, interposed between northern and southern Asia. Such is the rugged and impracticable nature of the country, that it can be traversed only in a few valleys, the waters of which descend from the summit of the ridge towards Hindostan, and which from the earliest ages have constituted the

well-known and only routes from the northward into its burning plains. These roads either pass through Herat, and reach Cabul by Furrah and Candahar, or else cross the Bamian Pass at the upper extremity of the valley of Cabul, and divide in their descent towards Hindostan, some going from Candahar by the Kojuck and Bolan Passes into the western territories of India, but the chief from Cabul by the celebrated Khyber Pass direct to Attock on the upper Indus. It is by the latter route that Alexander the Great, Timour, Nadir Shah, and all the great conquerors of India, have penetrated into the country watered by the Indus and the Ganges. The valley in which Cabul is situated, 6000 feet above the sea, is wide, fertile for a mountain region, and abounds with corn, pasture-lands, and the fruits of Europe. But when the road approaches the Khyber Pass, which may be truly called the Iron Gate of India, it enters a defile above fifty miles in length, often only a few yards in breadth, overhung with terrific precipices on either side, sometimes three or four thousand feet in height, where the mountain-path descends on the edge of a roaring torrent, fed even in the height of summer by the melting of the snows in the mountains above.

21. Like other mountaineers, the inhabitants of Affghanistan are descended from various races, which, spreading upwards from the adjoining valleys and plains on the south and north, have formed a group of different families of mankind, held together by the strong bond of identity of circumstances and common necessity. Brave, independent, and strongly bound by the ties of clan and feudal attachment, they are turbulent and vindictive both to strangers and their own countrymen. Their mutual injuries are many, their feuds still more frequent. Blood is ever crying aloud for blood; revenge is deemed the first of the social virtues; retribution the most sacred inheritance transmitted from father to son. Living under a dry, clear, and bracing climate, but subject to extreme

vicissitudes of heat and cold, the people are strong and active, and capable of undergoing great fatigue on horseback, the only mode of travelling of which the rugged nature of the country admits. Kindly and considerate to their dependants, the chiefs are served with loyal zeal and devoted fidelity by their clans; and in no part of Asia are the bonds of slavery, whether in the household, the farm, or the tenure, more lightly felt. Hospitable and generous, they receive the stranger without suspicion, and entertain him without stint. In foreign transactions, whether with individuals or other nations, they are often distinguished by the usual fraud and dissimulation of the Asiatics; but when their personal honour is pledged, they have the loyalty and truth of European chivalry. Trade and commerce of every kind are held in utter contempt; they are intrusted to Persians, Hindoos, and Russians, who frequent the bazaars and fairs of Herat, Candahar, and Cabul, and supply the rude mountaineers with the broadcloths of Russia, the spices of India, and the manufactures of Ispahan, to the whole extent required by their simple wants and limited means of purchase.*

22. The history of Affghanistan, from the earliest times, like that of most mountainous regions, presents a uniform succession of internal feuds, and perpetual changes both in the order of succession in the reigning families, and the houses in which the government of the different tribes was vested, without the regular hereditary succession and right of primogeniture which have in every age been the main pillars of European stability. Supreme power has generally been the prize of a fortunate soldier, and its loss the penalty of an effeminate inmate of the seraglio. Its boundaries have advanced or receded according as an intrepid and skilful

* This brilliant description is mainly taken from Kaye's *Affghanistan*—a splendid and elaborate work, which forms the staple of all that has, or ever can be, written on this most interesting campaign. The author has seldom altered the language in striking passages: he would as soon think of improving on Xenophon or Livy.

captain has pushed its predatory tribes into the adjoining states, or been subjected to their inroads in his own. Even the great conquerors, whose victorious standards have so often traversed Asia like a whirlwind in every direction, have never made any lasting change on its government or its fortunes. Every valley sent forth its little horde of men to swell the tide of conquest, and share in its spoils as long as the career of success lasted, and on such occasions Affghanistan had often proved a most powerful ally to the victor. But it never formed a lasting acquisition to his dominions. When the din of war ceased, and the stream of conquest had rolled past; matters returned to their old state; valley was armed against valley, chieftain against chieftain, tribe against tribe; and the Affghans, left to themselves in their barren hills, ceased to be formidable to the world, till a new conqueror roused them to war, to victory, and to plunder.

23. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, the DOURANEE EMPIRE, which had risen to pre-eminence in these mountain-wilds, embraced a very large territory. "It consisted of Affghanistan Proper, part of Khorassan, Cashmere, and the Derajat. Bounded on the north and east by immense and inaccessible snowy ranges, and on the south and west by vast sandy deserts, it opposed to external hostility obstacles of an almost insurmountable character. Spreading over the crest of the great range, it extended from Herat on the west to Cashmere on the east, and from Balkh on the north to Shikarpoor on the south." * This extensive region was capable, when its military strength was fully drawn forth, of sending 200,000 horsemen into the field; and it was able, therefore, to furnish the most effective aid to any military power possessed of resources adequate to bringing such immense forces into action. But, like all other mountain states, it was miserably deficient in the means of paying, equipping, or feeding them. From its own resources it could not maintain an army of more than twelve thousand men, and unless,

* Compressed from KAYE, i. 10, 11.

therefore, it was powerfully supported by some other state capable of supplying this deficiency, it could not be considered as formidable to either its southern or northern neighbours. Like the Swiss or Circassians, the Affghans make a trade of selling their blood to any foreign nation which will take them into its pay; and the command of its formidable defiles, the gates of India, may at any time be obtained by the power which is rich or wise enough to take that simple method of gaining possession of these important passes.

24. In the close of the last century, when the Douranee empire was at the zenith of its greatness, and the French Government, under the guidance of Napoleon, was bent on striking a decisive blow at Great Britain through its Indian possessions, a formidable coalition against them was not only possible, but within the bounds of probability. Zemaun Shah was at the head of the Affghans, and all the adjacent tribes, whom he had subjected to his dominion. The memory of the last invasion of the Affghans, which had been entirely successful, served to awaken the utmost alarm in India when it was known that he was openly making preparations for the invasion of Hindostan, and about to descend the Khyber Pass at the head of an innumerable host of these formidable mountaineers. In reality, he was in secret urged on by Napoleon, who had, when in Egypt, been in correspondence with Tippoo Saib for the subversion of the British power in India, and since his fall and his own alliance with Russia, had concluded, in 1801, a treaty with the Emperor Paul for an invasion of India by a European army of seventy thousand men, composed one-half of French, and one-half of Russians. This regular force was to have proceeded by Astrakhan, Herat, Candahar, and Cabul, to Attock on the Indus, and was to have been preceded by Zemaun Shah, at the head of a hundred thousand Affghans. At the approach of forces so formidable, it was not doubted that the whole native powers of India would rise in a body

to expel the hated islanders from their shores.

25. Although Marquess Wellesley, to whom the government of India at this period was intrusted, was well aware of the inability of Affghanistan, without external aid, to invade India, he yet knew what powerful assistance it was capable of rendering to any great power which should attempt that object. He therefore took the most effectual means to avert the danger by entering into close relations with the Court of Persia. With this view he selected a young officer who had been distinguished in the siege of Seringapatam, Captain, afterwards SIR JOHN MALCOLM, who was despatched to Teheran in the end of 1799. With such talent and diplomatic skill did the young envoy, who was thoroughly master of the Oriental languages, acquit himself of his duties, that a treaty, eminently favourable to Great Britain, was concluded soon after his arrival in Persia. He distributed largesses with a liberal hand, and "the name of England became great in Iran."* Before this treaty was concluded, the danger, so far as Zemaun Shah was concerned, had been postponed by an internal war in which he had become involved, which had drawn him back from Peshawur to Candahar. By the treaty it was provided, that "should any army of the French nation attempt to settle, with a view of establishing themselves on any of the islands or shores of Persia, a conjoint force shall be appointed by the two high contracting parties to effect their extirpation." Its original conditions further bound the Persian Government to "slay and disgrace" any Frenchman intruding into Persia; and in the event of Zemaun Shah attempting to descend upon India from Cabul, to operate a diversion from the side of Herat. This treaty, however,

* "The expense I have incurred is very heavy, and it is on that score that I am alarmed. Not that it is one farthing more than I have, to the best of my judgment, thought necessary to answer, or rather further, the ends of my mission, and to support the dignity of the British Government."—CAPTAIN MALCOLM to LORD WELLESLEY, 26th July 1800; KAYE, I. 8.

which the French historians justly condemn as exceeding the bounds of diplomatic hostility, was never formally ratified, and soon became a dead letter, so far as Zemaun Shah was concerned. That dreaded potentate was soon after dethroned by one of his brothers, Mahmoud, made prisoner, and his eyes, according to the inhuman Asiatic custom, put out, as Zemaun himself had done to his own elder brother, whom he had dethroned. The blind and unhappy sovereign sought refuge in the British dominions; and the mighty conqueror, who, it was feared, was to follow in the footsteps of Timour or Genghis Khan, sank into an obscure recipient of British bounty in the city of Loodianah, in Hindostan.

26. Time went on, however, and brought its wonted changes on its wings both in Europe and Asia. Napoleon, indeed, never lost sight of his design of striking a decisive blow at England through her Indian possessions; conferences on the subject were renewed with the Emperor Alexander at Erfurth, and such was the magic of the mighty conqueror's name, that all the eloquence and gold of Captain Malcolm were forgotten at the Court of Persia. In 1806 a Persian envoy was despatched to Paris to congratulate Napoleon on his victories in Europe, and in 1807 a French mission arrived in Persia, and was received with extraordinary distinction, charged with the task of organising and carrying into effect the long-meditated invasion of India by the combined forces of France and Russia. Lord Minto was the governor-general, and as Lord Wellesley had sought to establish a counterpoise to French influence in Affghanistan by an alliance with Persia, so now he sought to establish a barrier against Persia in Affghanistan. For this purpose a mission was despatched to Cabul under the Honourable MOUNTSTUART ELPHINSTONE, whose charming work first made the English acquainted with a country destined to acquire a melancholy celebrity in its annals. Mr Elphinstone was very cordially received by Shah Soojah, who had by this time dispos-

scussed his brother Malimoud in the ever-changeable government of Affghanistan, and a treaty was concluded, whereby that prince bound himself to resist any attempts of the French and Persians to advance through his territories to India.

27. Not content with thus rearing up a barrier in Affghanistan against the French designs in the East, the British Government endeavoured to counteract their influence in the Court of Persia itself. With this view, two missions were despatched, the first under Sir John Malcolm from India, the latter, headed by Sir Harford Jones, direct from London. The first was unsuccessful, the Court of Teheran refusing to receive the embassy in person, upon which Sir John Malcolm returned to Bombay. But Sir Harford Jones was more fortunate. Before the mission of which he was the head had arrived at the Persian capital, intelligence had been received of the French disasters in Spain in 1808, and their retreat behind the Ebro; and the increased arrogance of Russia, owing to the alliance of the Court of Teheran with France, had revived the ancient and hereditary animosity of the Persians against the Muscovites. Skilfully availing himself of these circumstances, Sir Harford, under Lord Castlereagh's direction, then Foreign Minister, succeeded in entirely neutralising the influence of France at the Court of Teheran, and concluded a treaty, offensive and defensive, between Persia and Great Britain. By this treaty the Persian monarch declared null all treaties previously concluded with any European power; engaged not to permit the passage of any European force through his dominions towards India; and in return England engaged, in the event of his being invaded by any European power, to furnish a military force, or in lieu thereof a subsidy in money, with such military stores as might be necessary for the repulsion of the invading force. Although this convention was only preliminary, and the definitive treaty, in terms or furtherance of it, was only signed in November 1814, yet it was

immediately acted upon, and its first effect was the dismissal of the French mission. The definitive treaty contained two articles regarding Affghanistan, which became of importance in after times. By the first, the Persian Government engaged to send an army against the Affghans, to be paid by the English Government, in the event of their going to war with that power; by the second, the British were restrained from interfering in any war between the Affghans and the Persians, unless their mediation was desired by both parties.

28. The stupendous events which occurred in Europe in 1814 and 1815 entirely removed the danger of French invasion of India, which had been so much the object of dread both to the British and Indian Government for fifteen years before. But in its stead succeeded the terror of another power, so much the more formidable as it had been victorious in the bloody strife which had so long distracted Europe, and as its dominions lay not at a distance from, but contiguous to, the Persian provinces. Russia had long been an object of apprehension to the kings of Teheran, and that feeling had been greatly increased since the incorporation of Georgia with the Muscovite dominions had brought the standards of the Czar over the Caucasus, and into close proximity with the northern provinces of Persia. The great progress, however, made by the British officers who, after the peace of 1814, had been taken into the Persian service, in equipping and drilling a large body of infantry after the European fashion, inspired the Government with an undue opinion of their own strength; and Abbas Mirza, the heir to the throne, deemed himself invincible when he had 20,000 of these fine-looking troops to rely on. Inspired with these ideas, the Government of Persia in an evil hour rushed into a conflict with Russia, fondly hoping that they would succeed in wresting Georgia from them, and throwing the battalions of the Czar beyond the Caucasus. The event proved how miserably they had been mistaken. To enable Asiatic troops to rival European,

it is necessary to give them not only European discipline, but European OFFICERS. The Persians, defeated in several battles, were compelled to sue for peace, which they obtained only by abandoning the great fortress of Erivan, and their whole defensible frontier towards the north. The territory thus ceded by the treaty of 1828 to Russia was nearly equal in extent to the whole of England, and brought the Muscovite outposts to within a few days' march of the Persian capital. By this treaty, as Sir Harford Jones justly remarked, "Persia was delivered, bound hand and foot, to the Court of St Petersburg," and its prostration was the more discreditable to Great Britain that the latter power was bound by the treaty of 1814, in the event of a war between Persia and *any European power*, either to send an army from India to assist in its defence, or to pay an annual subsidy of two hundred thousand tomauns during its continuance.

29. As the fatal treaty of 1828 was a turning-point in Eastern politics, and for the first time brought England and Russia into scarcely disguised hostility in central Asia, it is material to look back for half a century, and see what the policy and advances of the latter power have been during that period, and what was the necessity which impelled the British Government at length into the perilous Affghanistan expedition. This cannot be so well done as in the words of the able diplomatist who for so long had charge of the interests of England at the Court of Persia: "A reference to the map," says Sir John M'Neill, "will show that, within the last half century, Russia has advanced her frontier in every direction, and that even the Caspian Sea, which appeared to oppose an impediment to her progress, she has turned to advantage by appropriating it to herself." It will be seen that the plains of Tartary have excited her cupidity, while the civilised states of Europe have been dismembered to augment her dominions. Not content with this, she has crossed over into America, and

there disputes, in direct violation of her engagements to England, the right of our merchants to navigate the rivers that debouch on its western coasts. It

It be seen that the acquisitions she has made from Sweden are greater than what remains of that ancient kingdom; that her acquisitions from Poland are as large as the whole Austrian empire; that the territory she has wrested from Turkey in Europe is equal to the dominions of Prussia, exclusive of her Rhenish provinces; that her acquisitions from Turkey in Asia are equal in extent to the whole smaller states of Germany, the Rhenish provinces of Prussia, Belgium, and Holland taken together; that the country she has conquered from Persia is about the size of England; that her acquisitions in Tartary have an area equal to Turkey in Europe, Greece, Italy, and Spain; and that the territory she has acquired since 1772 is greater in extent and importance than the whole empire she had in Europe before that time.

30. "Every portion of these vast acquisitions, except, perhaps, that in Tartary, has been obtained in opposition to the views, the wishes, and the interests of England. In sixty-four years she has advanced her frontier eight hundred and fifty miles towards Vienna, Berlin, Dresden, Munich, Paris; she has approached four hundred and fifty miles nearer to Constantinople; she has possessed herself of the capital of Poland, and has advanced to within a few miles of the capital of Sweden, from which, when Peter the Great mounted the throne, she was distant three hundred miles. Since that time she has stretched herself forward about a thousand miles towards India, and the same distance towards the capital of Persia. The regiment that is now stationed at her farthest frontier-post on the western shores of the Caspian, has as great a distance to march back to Moscow as onward to Attock on the Indus, and is actually farther from St Petersburg than from Lahore, the capital of the Sikhs. The battalions of the Russian imperial guard that invaded Persia,

found, at the conclusion of the war, that they were as near to Herat as to the banks of the Don, that they had already accomplished half the distance from their capital to Delhi, and that from their camp in Persia they had as great a distance to march back to St Petersburg as onward to the capital of Hindostan. Meanwhile the Moscow Gazette threatens to dictate at Calcutta the next peace with England; and Russia never ceases to urge the Persian Government to accept from it, free of all cost, officers to discipline its troops, and arms and artillery for its soldiers, at the same time that her own battalions are ready to march into Persia whenever the Shah, to whom their services are freely offered, can be induced to require their assistance."

31. The weight due to the important facts stated in this striking passage, and which every one acquainted with history knows to be strictly true, had been much increased, since the termination of the Persian war in 1828, by what had occurred in Europe. The war with Turkey, terminated by the passage of the Balkan and the capture of Adrianople in 1829, had utterly prostrated the strength of the Ottoman power; while the victories of Mehemet Ali, and the ruinous refusal of Great Britain to render any assistance to the Porte to avert his victorious arms from Constantinople in 1832, had of necessity thrown Turkey into the arms of Russia. At the same time, the political changes in Western Europe had gone far to dissolve the ancient alliance between Russia and England, and to foster an angry feeling, from difference of internal government, between two empires already alienated by so many causes of jealousy in the East. The revolution of 1830 had again raised France to the head of the movement party in Europe; that of 1832 had, what was still more marvellous, placed England by her side. Russia, therefore, was impelled into the career of Oriental conquest not less by what she dreaded in the West than what she hoped in the East, and the opportunity appeared

eminently favourable for accomplishing both objects. For in proportion as England was assuming a more imperious tone in diplomacy, she was becoming weaker in military strength; and it was difficult to say whether the ruling party in the state was most set upon revolutionising all the adjoining states, or disbanding the forces at home, by which alone revolutionary thrones could be maintained.

32. Add to this that the difficulties of an overland march to India through central Asia are great, but by no means insuperable. But the Russian march of conquest, especially in the East, renders it a matter of calculation, and its success, if unopposed, a moral certainty. The Court of St Petersburg never trusts anything to chance, or the hazardous accidents of unprepared warfare. It would never sanction an expedition like that of Napoleon to Moscow, or England to Cabul. Slowly but steadily advancing, securing its acquisitions, like the Romans, by the construction of roads, and the erection of fortresses, and then successively rendering each conquest the base of operations for the next, it has succeeded for a century past, without experiencing any *lasting* disaster, in advancing its dominion even over the wildest regions in every direction. The march to the Indus is long, the mountains intervening high, the difficulties great; but the distance is not so great, the country not so arid, the wilds not so interminable, as the route to Kamtschatka, which is daily traversed by her troops without difficulty. The Russian system is to impel the lesser states in its alliance into foreign conquest or aggression before they hazard their own troops in it, and to bring the latter up towards the close of the contest, when the first difficulties have been overcome, the opposite parties are wellnigh exhausted, and she may, without serious opposition, achieve decisive success. It was thus that, having subdued Persia by the war of 1827, she made it the platform for future operations, and impelled the Persian forces into an attack on Afghanistan in 1837.

Had she succeeded in that, she would have made roads, built fortresses, collected magazines, and organised auxiliary forces in its wild regions, and not attempted a descent on the Indus till the whole physical difficulties had been surmounted, and the prospect of plunder, or the spirit of fanaticism, had brought the whole strength of Asia to her assistance.

33. To counteract the designs of a government guided by such a policy, possessed of such resources, and actuated by such ambition, both political and military, had now become a matter of absolute necessity to the British Government, and the supineness or neglect of former times only rendered this necessity, when Lord Auckland arrived in India in 1835, the more pressing. The war of 1828 had broken down the military strength of Turkey, the treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi had converted what remained of it into an auxiliary force of Russia. The war of 1827 had swept away the barrier of Persia, and it was easy to foresee that in the next conflict in the East the contest would be begun by the Court of Teheran, and the battalions of Russia would be preceded in their steady march towards Hindostan by the desultory forces of the king of kings. Afghanistan, beyond all doubt, would be the next object of attack. Herat, its frontier fortress towards the west, emphatically styled the "Gate of Hindostan," was already designed as the place where the first blow would be struck. To an empire wielding the military strength of sixty millions of men, but only enjoying a revenue of sixteen millions, the prospect of a country where a revenue of twenty-four millions was reaped by its maritime conquerors presented an irresistible object of attraction.

34. Fortunately, if Afghanistan was the only remaining barrier against Russian influence and aggression, the character of its inhabitants afforded an easy means of retaining them in British interests. Fickle, fond of change, and divided among each other from time immemorial by intestine feuds, there

were yet two particulars in which they all united—these were, the love of independence, and the love of money. At the Persians in particular, immediate neighbours on the east and west, they entertained the most violent hereditary animosity, similar to that felt in former days by the Scotch or the Welsh against the English. To be left undisturbed in their mountain fastnesses, without restraint on their contests with each other, was their great object; but though detesting the yoke of the stranger, they were by no means insensible to the merits of his gold. Inhabiting a barren and churlish land, they sought in vain for wealth in the produce of their own industry; and from time immemorial they had been accustomed to look for it either in foreign conquest, or the subsidies of foreign powers. In this money contest England had decidedly the advantage of Russia; her Indian possessions alone yielded a revenue a half greater than the whole territories of the Czar put together. The obvious way of dealing with such a people, therefore, was to make no attempt to penetrate into their country, or coerce them by military force, but to attract them by the certain magnet of gold. It was the more easy to do this that the magnificent largesses of Mr Elphinstone in former days at Cabul, and of Sir John Malcolm in Persia, had diffused the most unbounded ideas of British riches and generosity in all central Asia, and the arrival of every envoy from the Government of Calcutta awakened a fever of cupidity in the country, which was capable of being turned to the best advantage. A hundred or two hundred thousand a-year judiciously applied to the Afghanistan tribes would have retained them all in British interests, not endangered the life of one man, and effectually closed the Gate of India against Russian ambition.

35. The peculiar circumstances of Afghanistan, when it first became in a manner the battle-field between Great Britain and Russia, were eminently favourable to the establishment of this steady money power of the former

among its desultory tribes. Zemaun Shah, as already observed, had been deposed and blinded by his brother Mahmoud in 1801; and he, in his turn, had been deposed, though, with unwonted clemency, not deprived of sight, by a still younger brother, SHAH SOOJAH-OOL-MOOLK, whose name acquired a melancholy celebrity in the events which followed. But Shah Soojah, a violent and ill-starred though ambitious man, was unable to keep the throne he had gained. He was, after a short reign, dispossessed of the throne by Mahmoud, who reasserted his rights, and obliged to take refuge at the court of Lahore. This capital had recently become famous from the ambition and rise of RUNJEET SINGH, whose abilities and energy had raised a small tribe to the rank of a powerful empire on the banks of the Sutlej, in northern India. He brought with him from his lost kingdom the famous KOH-I-NOOR diamond, esteemed the largest in the world, which was immediately wrested from him by his ruthless and unscrupulous host, Runjeet. And now the trophy of victory adorns the brow of our gracious sovereign, Queen Victoria.

36. The subsequent adventures of Shah Soojah, as detailed in his own autobiography, in his efforts to regain his throne, exceeded anything which fiction has imagined of the marvellous. By a wonderful exertion of skill and resolution, he succeeded in making his escape in the disguise of a mendicant from the prison into which he had been thrown by Runjeet Singh, and, after undergoing great hardships, reached, in 1816, the British station of Loodianah, where, like his brother Zemaun Shah, he became, with his family, a pensioner on the bounty of the East India Company. Mahmoud, however, did not enjoy the throne of Affghanistan long. As is often the case in Eastern story, he became the victim of the ambition and treachery of his vizier, Futteh Khan, who had been mainly instrumental in effecting the late revolution in his favour, and who was desirous of making his own clan, the Barukzye, a diminutive branch of

the great Douranee tribe, the governing power in the country. His youngest brother, DOST MAHOMMED, who afterwards became still more famous in British history, treacherously made himself master of the city of Herat, and even insulted some ladies of high rank in the harem of the governor of that place. Upon this he was attacked by Prince Kamran, the son of Mahmoud Shah, and forced to take refuge in Cashmere, where his brother was governor. Futteh Khan, the powerful vizier, was subsequently made prisoner, and, after being deprived of sight, cut to pieces in the presence of the king and prince because he refused to order his brother to surrender. But this success was of short duration. Dost Mahommed, who was a man of uncommon energy and resolution, and extremely beloved by the hill-tribes, raised an army, and, advancing against Cabul, made himself master of that capital, from which Mahmoud Shah and his son Kamran fled to Herat, which still acknowledged their sovereignty, and established themselves in that fragment of the Douranee empire. Though Ayooob, an obscure prince of the royal race of the Suddozyes, was proclaimed king, yet the real sovereignty now passed into the hands of the sons of Futteh Khan—Azim Khan, Dost Mahommed, and their brothers—who parcelled out the country amongst themselves. But a furious domestic strife soon ensued between the Barukzye brethren, which ended, in 1826, after the death of Azim Khan, and the deposition of Ayooob, in the recognised supremacy of Dost Mahommed. That able ruler succeeded in maintaining himself in Cabul and the central provinces, where he was extremely beloved, and where his government, as that of firm and intrepid men always is in the East, was found to be a perfect blessing to the people. Shah Soojah made several unsuccessful attempts, like Henry VI. in English story, to regain his lost inheritance, but they were all shattered against the superior capacity and fortune of the successful occupant of the throne. The provinces which acknowledged

the sway of Dost Mahommed were those of Cabul, Bamian, Ghuznee, Candahar, Ghouband, and Jellalabad; but a part, it is true, of the old Douranee empire, founded by Ahmed Shah, half a century before, but the most important, as lying in its centre, and commanding the whole passes from Persia into India.

37. In this distracted state of the Affghanistan empire were to be found the certain and easy means of establishing, not British government or rule, but British influence, in the whole hill-country beyond the Indus. The people were so divided by the successful usurpations which had taken place that they had ceased to be formidable as enemies, while the reigning heads of the clans which were disputing, and had in different places obtained the supremacy, were so insecurely seated on their thrones that British countenance and British gold were alike important to their success. To Dost Mahommed, in particular, our alliance was of inestimable importance, as he was a usurper who belonged to a different and rival clan from that which had before possessed the throne. And though supported, as Napoleon was in France, by the great majority of the people, he had to contend with a dispossessed party, which would make every effort to regain it, and an indelible pretender, who, like the unfortunate Charles Edward in Scottish story, was hovering round the kingdom, in search of a place to effect an entrance. He accordingly was most anxious to cultivate the British alliance, and a trifling annual subsidy would to a certainty have secured him as a faithful ally.

38. While these obvious considerations promised a ready sway over Dost Mahommed to the British Government, another circumstance equally bound Kamran, the Shah of Herat, then belonging to the rival house, in our interests. Persia, which had now, since the peace of 1828, been the mere vassal of Russia, laid claim to a sovereignty over this city and its dependencies, founded partly on the conquests of Nadir Shah, partly on a payment of

for a considerable period to the ruler of Persia by Kamran, the pre-ruler of Herat, and partly on engagements entered into by that ruler while the Shah of Persia was employed in reducing Khorassan to obedience. The claim laid extended to all Affghanistan, as far as Ghuznee, and included Candahar. Great Britain, however, was debarred by the 9th article of the existing treaty from interfering between the Persians and Affghans, unless called on by *both* parties; a thing which was not very likely to occur, when the former was entirely under the direction of Russia. The Shah of Persia was resolved to make good his claims by force of arms, and the ruler of Herat was equally determined to resist him. Russia incessantly urged Persia into this contest; Muscovite officers were largely employed in drilling the Persian armies; Muscovite engineers in directing their artillery; and under the name of "Russian deserters," a regiment of its troops was openly employed in the Persian service, and was much superior in discipline and equipment to any force which the Affghans could bring against it. In impelling its vassal, Persia, into this war, Russia was only following up its usual policy, which was to precede its own conquests by the arms of its dependants, as a general pushes forward his tirailleurs before he brings the masses of regular troops into action. In this extremity the Shah of Herat naturally looked to Great Britain for protection, the only power capable of counterbalancing the Czar in central Asia; and thus, while the uncertainty of his tenure of the throne naturally inclined Dost Mahommed to our alliance, the imminent hazard of subjugation by Persia, backed by the Colossus of the North, was equally sure to retain the ruler of Herat in our interests.

39. The only drawback to this generally auspicious state of things on the side of Affghanistan consisted in the rival pretensions of a new state, which had recently risen to eminence in the Punjab. This was the kingdom of the SIKHS. This remarkable tribe

had long been known on the banks of the Sutlej, and in customs and religion differed considerably from any of the adjoining ones. It had never, however, attained to remarkable eminence, or been considered as one of the great powers of India, till its direction fell into the hands of a chieftain of talents and energy, RUNJEET SINGH. This sagacious and indefatigable man, observing attentively the course of events for the last half century between the British and the native powers, whom they successively vanquished, arrived at the conclusion that these hated islanders were for the time invincible, and that the only way in the end to rear up a barrier to their conquests, was in peace and silence to form a military force, disciplined after the European fashion, capable of bringing into the field an army equal to their own. For this purpose he offered the greatest encouragement to French officers to settle amongst his people, and intrusted them with the entire direction of his military forces. But it was the disbanding of so large a part of the sepoy force by Lord William Bentinck, in pursuance of the economical ideas of the day, which was one great source of Runjeet Singh's military strength. Many of those whom he dismissed took service with the Sikh chief, who thus acquired an army, containing a large mixture of old British soldiers, directed by French officers, and trained to the very highest point of discipline and steadiness in the field.

40. Had it been possible to have united the Sikhs with the Affghans in the British alliance, they would have formed a barrier impenetrable alike to the bayonets and the intrigues of Russia, and which, by the vast armies and the still vaster revenue of the British in India, might have bid defiance to the world. But, unfortunately, this was very far indeed from being the case. Runjeet Singh had taken advantage of the distracted state of the Dourance empire, in consequence of the civil dissensions which have been mentioned, and by the aid of his numerous and disciplined battalions had succeeded in wresting from its chief the whole

province of Peshawur, being the part of Affghanistan which lay next to India, and which was the more valuable as nearly a moiety of the whole revenue of the old Affghanistan empire had been derived from its inhabitants. This invasion was justly regarded as an unpardonable offence by Dost Mahomed and the other rulers of Affghanistan, and they had nothing so much at heart as to regain this lost portion of the inheritance of their fathers. But Runjeet Singh was equally determined to retain it, for, next to his capital Lahore, it formed the brightest jewel in his crown. Thus the seeds of rancorous hostility and interminable jealousy were sown between these two powers, both of whom lay on the direct route from Russia to India, and the alliance of either of which would be of essential importance either to the English in defending, or the Russians in forcing an entrance into that country. To conciliate both was scarcely possible, and the great point for consideration was, which was most likely to prove of service to our interests, and which could most be relied on in the contest with the great northern power which seemed to be approaching.

41. The war of artillery, however, was preceded, as usual in such cases, by the strife of diplomatists; and there the ability of the Muscovites appeared more clearly than in their military operations. The Russian Government despatched a confidential agent, named Vickovich, to Cabul, who was fortified by a holograph letter* from the Czar

* "A. C.—In a happy moment the messenger of your highness, Mirza Hassan, reached my court with your friendly letter. I was very much delighted to receive it, and very much gratified by its perusal. The contents of the letter prove that you are my well-wisher, and have friendly opinions towards me. It flattered me very much, and I was convinced of your friendship to my everlasting government. In consequence of this, and preserving the terms of friendship which are now commenced betwixt you and myself, in my heart I will feel always happy to assist the people of Cabul who may come to trade in my kingdom. On the arrival of your messenger, I have desired him to make preparations for his long journey back to you, and also appointed a man of dignity to accompany him on the part of my government. If it please God he arrives safe, he will present

himself. He arrived there on the 19th December 1837, ostensibly as a commercial agent, really to carry out the diplomatic instructions given him by Count Simonich, the Russian minister at Teheran, in the middle of September. Before his arrival, however, the British Government had sent Captain, afterwards Sir Alexander Burnes, on a similar mission to the court of Cabul, ostensibly for commercial, really for political purposes. The British envoy had been received in the most favourable manner by Dost Mahommed, who made no secret of his anxious wish to enter into the most friendly relations with the British Government, and upon the promise of such a subsidy annually paid as would enable him to maintain his position, to enter into an alliance offensive and defensive with them. Fifty thousand pounds a-year was all he demanded; a trifle in England, but a very great sum in those parts, as his whole revenue was only fifteen lacs of rupces, or £150,000, a-year. So great was the influence of the British diplomatist, and so strong the desire of the Affghan chief to cultivate the British alliance, that he at first, on learning of the Russian envoy's approach, despatched orders to prevent him from entering the city; and when he did arrive, he immediately sent for the British agent, and declared his determination not to receive overtures of any sort from any other power, as long as he had any hope of sympathy or assistance from the British Government.*

to you the rarities of my country, which I have sent through him. By the grace of God may your days be prolonged.—Sent from St Petersburg, the capital of Russia, on the 27th April 1837, in the 12th year of my reign.”—KAYE, i. 201, note.

* “On the morning of the 19th, Dost Mahommed came over early from the Bala-Hissar, with a letter from his son, the governor of Ghuznee, saying that the Russian agent had arrived in that city on his way to Cabul. Dost Mahommed said he had come for my counsel on the occasion; that he wished to have nothing to do with any other power than the British; that he did not wish to receive any agent of any power whatever, as long as he had a hope of sympathy from us; and that he would order the Russian agent to be turned out, detained on the road,

42. Unfortunately, the policy of the British Government, and the powers committed to their envoy at Cabul, were very little calculated to improve these friendly dispositions. The days were those of economy and retrenchment; and anything appeared to be preferable to incurring at the moment any outlay of money which could possibly be avoided. The presents he brought for the chief and the ladies of his zenana were trifling and contemptible, and painfully contrasted with the magnificent gifts which during the former mission had been lavished with so unsparing a hand by Mr Elphinstone, and spread such magnificent ideas of British grandeur and generosity. The envoy was empowered to promise nothing, engage for nothing; and although accurately informed by him of the imminence of the danger, and that it was a neck-and-neck race between England and Russia, neither a man nor a guinea was tendered to the chief who held the keys of India in his hand, and could avert calamities unnumbered from the British empire.* Peshawur undoubtedly made

or act in any way I desired him. He gave me up all the letters, which I sent off express to Lord Auckland.”—SIR A. BURNES to GOVERNOR-GENERAL, 19th December 1837; KAYE, i. 188, 189.

“Nothing could have been more discouraging than the reception of the Russian agent. Dost Mahommed still clung to the belief that the British Government would look favourably on his case, and *was willing to receive a little from England rather than a great deal from any other power*. But he soon began to perceive that even that little was not to be obtained. Before the close of January, Burnes had received specific instructions from the Governor-General, and was compelled, with the strongest feelings of mortification and reluctance on his part, to strangle the hopes Dost Mahommed had so long encouraged of a friendly mediation of the British Government between the Ameer and Runjeet Singh.”—KAYE, i. 190, 191.

* “We are in a mess here—Herat is besieged, and may fall, and the Emperor of Russia has sent an agent to Cabul to offer Dost Mahommed money to fight Runjeet Singh. I could not believe my eyes or ears, but Captain Vickovich (that is the agent's name) arrived here with a blazing letter three feet long, and sent immediately to pay his respects to me. The Ameer (Dost Mahommed) came over to me sharp, and offered to do as I liked—kick him out, or anything; and since he was so friendly, I said, Give me the

a difficulty, as it was claimed and eagerly sought both by the Afghan and Sikh chiefs, and it was no easy matter for the English Government to reconcile their contending interests, or retain them both in our alliance. But such was the anxiety of Dost Mahomed to preserve the most amicable relations with the British Government, that by the promise of a very moderate subsidy from them, he might easily have been induced to forego his demand for the disputed province, and remain steady in the British alliance, without urging claims which might have compromised our relations with Runjeet Singh.* But, unhappily, Lord Auckland's policy was entirely different; and before the end of January, Captain Burnes received positive instructions, which compelled him, to his bitter mortification, to strangle the sanguine hopes which Dost Mahomed had long entertained of receiving assistance from Great Britain, and in a manner forced him to throw himself into the arms of the Emperor of Russia.

letters the agent has brought, all of which he surrendered sharp."—BURNES'S *Private Correspondence*; KAYE, I. 189.

Mr M'Neill's opinion, who wrote from the court of Persia, was equally clear. "Dost Mahomed Khan, with a little aid from us, could be put in possession of both Candahar and Herat. *I anxiously hope that aid will not be withheld.* A loan of money would possibly enable him to do this, and would give us a great hold upon him. He ought to be precluded from receiving any other foreign representatives or agents of any kind at his court, and should agree to transact all business with foreign powers through the British agent. *Unless something of this kind is done, we shall never be secure;* and until Dost Mahomed Khan, or some other Afghan, shall have got both Candahar and Herat into his hands, our position here must continue to be a false one."—MR M'NEILL to CAPTAIN BURNES, March 13, 1837 (MS. Records).

* "It appears to me that the opinions of Dost Mahomed call for much deliberation. It will be seen that the chief is not bent on possessing Peshawur, or on gratifying an enmity towards his brothers, but simply pursuing the worldly maxim of securing himself from injury. The arguments which he has adduced seem worthy of every consideration, and the more so when even an avowed partisan of Sultan Mahomed does not deny the justice of the Ameer's objection."—CAPTAIN BURNES to GOVERNOR-GENERAL, January 26, 1838; KAYE, I. 194, note.

43. The Russian envoy was by no means equally parsimonious in his professions or guarded in his promises. He informed Dost Mahomed that he was commissioned to express the sincere sympathy of the Russian Government with the difficulties under which he laboured; that they were willing to assist him in expelling Runjeet Singh from Peshawur, and would furnish him with money for that purpose, and renew it annually, expecting in return the chieftain's good offices. Even the mode of conveying the much-coveted treasure was specified; the Russians engaging to send it to Bokhara, whence Dost Mahomed was expected to convey it to his own capital. At the same time, the combined intrigues of Russia and Persia succeeded in effecting a treaty with the rulers of Candahar, by which they engaged to transfer to them the city and territory of Herat, to be held for a tribute to the Shah of Persia.* This treaty was guaranteed by Count Simonich on the part of Russia, in the following terms: "I, who am the minister-plenipotentiary of the exalted Government of Russia, will be guarantee that neither on the part of the Shah of Persia, nor on the part of the powerful Sirdars, shall there be any deviation from, nor violation of, this entire treaty and these agreements." Thus did the Russian Government, in pursuance of its usual policy, push forward the lesser states in its alliance, or under its influence, to precede its disciplined battalions in the career of conquest, and pioneer the way for its eagles in their march; and thus skilfully did it take advantage of their separate designs and ambition to effect an object from which itself in the end was alone to profit. To the Shah of Persia it promised the sovereignty of Herat as the reward of its reduction; to the Candahar chiefs, the possession of that city, subject to the suzerainty of Persia; and to Dost Mahomed, money to enable him to recover Pesh-

* Candahar was at this time governed by Kohun-dil-Khan and some other of the brothers of Dost Mahomed, who, though they to a certain extent acknowledged the Dost's supremacy, yet acted, when it so suited them, as independent chiefs.

awur from the Sikhs, and regain that lost appendage of the Douranee empire. * And the object of all this complicated diplomatic intrigue was to subject Herat, Cabul, Candahar, and Peshawur to its influence, and thus secure the co-operation of the rulers in all these cities, the keys of the mountain-regions, in its grand design of advancing its dominions to the banks of the Indus.*

44. HERAT was the place which became the first object of attack in pursuance of these complicated negotiations. "Surrounded," says an eye-witness, "by a fair expanse of country, where alternating corn-fields, vineyards, and gardens vary the richness and beauty of the scene, and the bright waters of small running streams lighten the pleasant landscape, lies the city of Herat." The eloquent words of Captain Conolly apply only to the beauty beyond the walls—within them, as in most Asiatic towns, all is dirt and desolation. But, in a military point of view, it is a position of the very highest importance. "Within the limits of the Heratee territory, all the great roads leading on India converge."† An army composed of foot and horse only, with a few pieces of light artillery, might traverse some of the passes, seventeen thousand feet in height, which intersect the stupendous range of the Hindoo Coosh; but one equipped with heavy artillery, and all the cumbersome appliances of modern war, can make its way by no other route from the north-west to the Indian frontier. The city stands in a rich plain lying at the foot of the mountains, the extraordinary fertility of which, especially

* "The Russian ambassador, who is always with the Shah, sends you a letter which I enclose. The substance of his verbal message to you is, that if the Shah does everything you want, so much the better; and if not, the Russian Government will furnish you with everything wanting. The object of the Russian envoy by this message is to have a road to the English, and for this they are very anxious. He is waiting for your answer, and I am sure he will serve you."—Agent of Cabul to DOST MAHOMMED, January 14, 1838, No. 6, *Correspondence regarding Afghanistan, laid before Parliament.*

† KAYE, i. 203.

in grain crops, has led to its being styled the "granary of central Asia." It presents, therefore, every advantage for the collecting of provisions and formation of magazines, to facilitate the transit, in the desolate mountain region which lies beyond, of a large army. The city itself contains about 45,000 inhabitants, and stands within four solid earthen walls, each about a mile long, which environ it in the form of a square. These walls, however, when the Persian army approached them, were in a very decayed state. The real defence of the place consisted in two covered-ways, or *fausse-brayes*, one in the inside, and the other in the outside of the ditch. The lower one was on the level of the surrounding country, its parapet partly covered by a mound of earth on the counterscarp formed by the accumulation of rubbish from the clearings of the ditch.*

45. When the Persian army, directed by Russian officers, and supported by the Russian battalion of "Deserters," approached the city, it was nominally under the rule of Kamran, the only one of the royal family who retained a part

* Taken from KAYE, i. 202, 204. In the history of the Affghanistan war, the Author thinks it right to say that the chief authority relied on, where others are not quoted, is Mr Kaye's graphic and admirable narrative of that memorable contest. In the library edition he is uniformly referred to when this is done at the end of each paragraph. The passages founded on are, however, not in general inserted as quotations with inverted commas, because they are almost all so much abridged, the Author being obliged, in two chapters and a half, to condense the matter of two large volumes. But he is the first to acknowledge his great obligations to that accurate and fascinating work, which, like Livy's narrative of the second Punic war, or Segur's of the Moscow campaign, will always form the groundwork of subsequent histories on the subject. Those who wish to investigate the military details will find the best account of the advance to Cabul in Havelock's Narrative; of the destruction of our army there, in Lieutenant Eyre's and Lady Sale's Journals; of the defence of Jellalabad, in Gleig's Account of Sale's Brigade in Affghanistan; and of the events in Western Affghanistan and the reconquest of Cabul, in Nott's Life; but the political and secret history of these events can only be found in the great mass of original documents quoted by Kaye, and worked up by him into a story of surpassing interest.

of the former Affghan monarchy. Worn out, however, by the debility induced by every species of excess, he was himself incapable of carrying on the government, which had entirely fallen into the hands of his vizier, Yar Mahomed, an able and energetic, but unprincipled and profligate man, whose son was the governor of the city. The terms which the Persian Shah offered to Kamran were, that he was to be deprived of the title of king; a Persian garrison was to be received into the city, where coins were to be struck in the name, and prayers offered for, the Persian king. On these conditions the Affghan chief was to be allowed to retain the government, and he was to join his forces to the Persian army and that of Dost Mahomed, and make war on the Sikhs. These terms were indignantly rejected by the Affghans; the old animosity at the Persians revived in full force; a general enthusiasm seized the people, and they prepared with resolute determination to maintain their independence. But their forces were small, their guns few and ill manned, their ramparts crumbling in decay; and all their efforts would probably have been unavailing, had it not been that on the day when the King made his public entry into the city to direct the war, a young English officer was in the crowd which assembled to witness his arrival, who soon acquired the lead in the defence which heroism and talent never fail to obtain in presence of danger—ELDRED POTTINGER.

46. The Persian army advanced in three divisions, the foremost of which, 10,000 strong, appeared before the walls on the 22d of November 1837. The fortress would not have held out a fortnight against an Anglo-Indian army of half the force; but the Persian host, though 30,000 strong when it all came up, contained few real soldiers, and was, with the exception of the Russian battalion, in a very rude and disorganised state. The inhabitants made a noble defence; and Yar Mahomed exerted himself with surprising vigour to stifle discontent and provide the means of resistance. Ground

was broken before the fortress on the 23d November; but the progress of the siege was for long very slow, although the fire even of the light artillery of the Persians brought down the rotten parapets like tinder. Sallies were made daily; and Pottinger, the real hero of the place, diffused into the breasts of all around him his own dauntless intrepidity. Under his command the operations of the besieged became not only energetic but skilful. The breaches were repaired as fast as they were made; in vain the flaming tempest descended on the inhabitants in their houses; water was provided as fast as they took fire. The people bore the conflagrations which ensued with a constancy worthy of the highest admiration; and though often despairing of the result, continued with mournful firmness to assert their independence.

47. The siege continued in this manner during the whole winter, without any material progress being made, except in the ruin of the houses in the town, accompanied with a melancholy loss of life. "Scarcely a shop," says Pottinger, "had escaped destruction; the shutters, seats, shelves, nay, even the very beams and door-posts, had been torn down for firewood; most of the houses were burnt or unroofed; scarcely any business was going on; here and there were gathered knots of pale and anxious citizens whispering their sufferings." Notwithstanding these discouraging circumstances, the defence was continued with a constancy unsurpassed in ancient or modern times; and the Affghans, leaving their walls, even made some successful sallies with their formidable horse upon the enemy. During the siege, Mr M'Neill, the British minister at the court of Toheran, came up to the Persian headquarters, and exerted his great diplomatic abilities to effect an accommodation, but in vain. On 18th April the fire of the besiegers was extremely violent, and the breaches on the east and north were declared practicable. The old walls were sliding down at every round. But instead of waiting for the assault which was on the point of be-

ing delivered, the Affghans themselves leapt over the parapet, streamed down the breaches, and, after a desperate hand-to-hand encounter, drove back the assailants at all points from the advanced trenches.

48. The 24th June was the most memorable day in the siege, for on it the final assault took place.* With characteristic supineness, although the signs of what was approaching were sufficiently evident, the garrison were off their guard. The vizier, Yar Mahomed, was at his quarters—most of the sentinels were asleep. Suddenly, at the signal of a discharge of a rocket from the Persian headquarters, five columns leapt out of the trenches and advanced to the assault of as many breaches. At four the assailants were repulsed; but at the fifth the stormers, gallantly led by their officers, succeeded in forcing the lower *fausse-braye*, where the defenders fell to a man. Encouraged by this success, they pushed up the slope, and after a brief but desperate struggle, the upper *fausse-braye* was also carried, and a few of the most daring assailants gained the top of the breach. They there met the Affghan reserve, which, by a violent rush, succeeded in driving the assailants down. Again they returned to the charge, again they were hurled down by the dauntless defenders. The conflict was fierce, the issue doubtful. Roused by the tumult, the vizier rode down towards the breach accompanied by Pottinger; but the heart of the Asiatic quailed before the terrors of that dreadful moment, and he could not be prevailed on to go to the spot where the terrible conflict raged. Not so the European: in that trying hour the West asserted its ancient superiority over the East. Pottinger's resolution never failed, and at length, partly by energetic appeals to his honour, partly by actual force, the vizier was brought up by him to the men as they were retiring from the breach, and they were rallied and led again to the conflict. Headed by the Englishman, and impelled forward by the vizier, who be-

* An assault had been made on the 18th June, but it proved unsuccessful.

laboured with a huge staff the hindmost of the party, the Affghans returned to the charge, and, leaping over the parapet, rushed out upon the stormers. The Persians, who were advancing with loud shouts in the full confidence of victory, were seized with a sudden panic on this unexpected onset, and fled headlong down the breach, where they were almost all slaughtered by the yataghians and bayonets of the Affghans. The crisis was over—the fortress was saved. The advance of Russia in central Asia was arrested by the heroism and conduct of one man, who inspired into the sinking hearts of the garrison a portion of his own indomitable resolution.*

49. The fate of Herat was, in reality, determined on this day; but the besieged were ignorant, as is often the case in desperate actions in war, of the magnitude of their own success, and retired in sorrow and mourning from the scene of their decisive triumph. The loss the Affghans had sustained was very great: gloom overspread their spirits, despair had seized on the bravest hearts. The Persians had lost 1700 men in the assault, the Affghans not more than half the number; but it was more severely felt, as their numbers were so much less considerable. Provisions also had become extremely scarce; the people were dying of famine in the streets; ammunition was beginning to fail, medical assistance and resources of all kinds were no longer to be had. The soldiers clamoured for bread or money, and increased the sufferings of the wretched inhabitants by breaking into and ransacking the houses, and torturing the persons of such as they suspected of having stores of either concealed. The blockade, which for long had been imperfect, had now been rendered complete, and no supplies of any sort could reach the beleaguered and famishing city. But in all these respects the condition of the besiegers

* This animated description is mainly taken from Pottinger's most interesting journal of the siege, excepting that relating to his noble personal conduct, which is given by Kaye; for, like all other really brave men, he is silent on his own exploits.

was little better, in some worse. Their energies were damped, sickness raged in their camp, their resources were wellnigh exhausted, their hopes extinguished. The siege was of necessity converted into a blockade; it became a mere question who should starve first. Yet was there no thought in the besieged of a surrender. "With open breaches," says Pottinger, "a starving soldiery, and a disaffected populace, they determined to hold out to the last."

50. But notwithstanding all their resolution, Herat must at length have fallen, and famine would have vanquished those whom the sword could not subdue, had not external events now begun which hastened the termination of this protracted siege. The British Government at Calcutta had at length become sensible of the vital interest which they had in the preservation of the gate of Hindostan, and tardily took measures to give it some slight succour. Lord Auckland, at the eleventh hour, and after the siege had lasted nine months, at the earnest request of Mr M'Neill, made a demonstration in the Persian Gulf, which, though not in itself of great magnitude, was attended with a surprising effect. The *Semiramis* and *Hugh Lindsay* steamers were despatched in the beginning of June from Bombay, with a battalion of marines and detachments of several regiments of native infantry, and on the 19th June anchored off the island of Karrack in the Persian Gulf, where they immediately landed. Intelligence of this unexpected apparition, magnified by the hundred tongues of rumour, was immediately conveyed to the Persian camp before Herat, and arrived there a few days after the repulse of the last assault. Soon after, Colonel Stoddart was despatched by Mr M'Neill to the Persian camp with a message, to the effect, that if the Persians did not retire from before Herat, and make reparation for the injuries which had been inflicted upon the English mission, it would be considered as a hostile demonstration against England. The envoy was courteously received by the

Shah. "The fact is," said the latter, "if I don't leave Herat, there will be war; is not that it?" "It is war," replied Stoddart; "all depends on your majesty's answer." "We consent to the whole demands of the British Government," said the Shah, two days afterwards (Aug. 17). "We will not go to war. Were it not for their friendship, we should not return from before Herat. Had we known that our coming here would have risked the loss of their friendship, we should not have come at all." Preparations for a retreat were soon after made in the Persian camp. The guns were first withdrawn from their advanced positions; the baggage-cattle were then collected, the tents struck, and on the 9th September the Shah mounted his horse and set his face homeward. The blockade was raised, and the Affghans beheld with speechless joy their wasted plains freed from the presence of the enemy.

51. The raising of the siege of Herat was an event of immense importance in central Asia, and, if duly improved, would have restored British influence over its whole extent, and averted all the calamities which ensued. As much as it raised the reputation of British arms and diplomacy, did it lower those of Russia. More even than battles, sieges have, in modern warfare, determined the fate of empires, and fixed the wavering current of general opinion in the East. The Czar had been foiled by England; Eldred Pottinger was the acknowledged hero of Herat, Mr M'Neill the successful diplomatic agent by whom the success had been effected. British influence was restored at the court of Teheran; gratitude for assistance rendered pervaded Affghanistan. So far did these new relations proceed, that although the Russian Government had, through their ambassador in Persia, Count Simonich, strongly urged the Persian Government to march upon Herat, advanced them 50,000 tomanes to aid in the expedition, and engaged, in the event of success, to remit the whole remainder of the debt due by Persia to Russia under the treaty of 1828, they disavowed the whole affair

when Lord Durham demanded explanations on the subject in 1839, and declared that if Count Simonich had encouraged Mahommed Shah to proceed against Herat, he had proceeded in direct violation of his instructions. At the same time they repudiated entirely Vickovich's proceedings at Cabul; a requital for valuable services by which that active agent was so disconcerted that he blew out his brains.

52. Thus did England and Russia first meet, with entire defeat to the latter, in the great battle-field of central Asia. "If we go on at this rate," said Baron Brunow, the ambassador of the Czar in London, to Sir John Hobhouse, "the Cossack and the Sepoy will soon meet on the banks of the Oxus." "Very probably, baron," replied the latter; "but however much I should regret the collision, I should have no fears of the result." In truth, the designs of Russia had now met with a signal check, and her aggressive policy had recoiled upon her own head. The system of impelling the northern powers upon the south before her own forces were brought into action—of bribing Persia to enter into the contest by the promise of Herat and the remission of the unpaid debt, Afghanistan by the offer of aid to recover Peshawur, and the Sikhs by indemnity for the loss of Peshawur by the spoils of India—had broken down at the outset. The influence of England in central Asia, wellnigh lost by the parsimonious system of late years, had been restored by the heroism of an English officer, and the devoted gallantry of his Afghan followers. Nothing was wanting but a conciliatory and liberal policy to secure the Afghanistan chiefs in the English alliance. Unfortunately these eminently favourable circumstances were turned to no account, or rather rendered the prolific source of evil, by the policy which they induced in the British Government. Instead of entering into an alliance with Dost Mahommed, the ruler of the people's choice, and who, by his vigour and capacity, had won for himself a throne by showing he was worthy of it, and capable

of meeting the wants of the country, they determined on dethroning that chief, and placing the exiled discredited sovereign, Shah Soojah, on the throne. The fact of his having proved incapable of ruling, or maintaining himself in power, and having been for thirty years an exile, during which he had, like his fellow-exiles in Europe, "learned nothing, forgotten nothing," was deemed of less importance than having a monarch on the throne who owed his restoration to British interference, and was identified with our Government by present interest and past obligation.

53. The result has proved that a greater and more lamentable mistake never was committed by any government. Shah Soojah was not only incapable of ruling Afghanistan, but he was in the highest degree unpopular with its inhabitants, and would have been so with any subjects. At once weak and cruel, irresolute and revengeful, he was utterly disqualified to rule a nation of barbarians, and possessed no merit but the unwearied perseverance with which he had striven to regain the lost inheritance of his fathers. On the other hand, Dost Mahommed was extremely popular with all classes, and by his vigour and capacity he had succeeded in establishing his power on a solid foundation. True, he was a usurper, the son of the vizier; he had gained a throne by dispossessing his lawful sovereign. But Shah Soojah was no better; he had for a brief period held the throne by expelling from it his elder brother, who had himself won it by dethroning and depriving of sight Zemaun Shah, the true inheritor of the crown of the Douranee empire. The race of the viziers had succeeded to that of the imbecile shahs, as that of the *maitres du palais*, from which Charles Martel and Charlemagne sprang, had in the olden time to the worn-out dynasty of the *rois faineants* of the first race in France. The claim of legitimacy had as little to recommend Shah Soojah as his personal character or qualifications. He was not the rightful heir to the throne; Kamran the victorious, the

ruler of Herat, and his family came in before him. In every point of view, therefore, the determination to replace Shah Soojah upon the throne, and displace Dost Mahommed, was inexpedient and unjust. It was unjust to the rightful heir, for it tended to place a usurper permanently on the throne; it was unjust to the Affghans, for it was intended to deprive them of their inherent right, so frequently exercised amidst the changes of Asiatic government, of choosing their own ruler, and to force upon them a weak and hated sovereign, equally incapable of winning a throne by conquest or retaining it from inheritance. It was unjust towards Dost Mahommed, who, so far from injuring, had done everything in his power to favour British subjects and interests, and had evinced the greatest anxiety to enter into the closest alliance with the Government of Calcutta. It was to the last degree inexpedient for our Indian empire; for instead of erecting a powerful barrier against the threatening dangers of Russian conquest, it was calculated to weaken that which already existed. It threatened to involve the English Government in the endless maze of Affghan politics, and instead of bringing to their support a powerful ally and a gallant people, encumber them by the defence of a distant dependant, who could be upheld only by the force of foreign bayonets.

54. These considerations, which were strongly urged upon Lord Auckland by Captain Burnes, and those best acquainted with the real state of Affghanistan, were entirely disregarded, and it was resolved at all hazards to dispossess Dost Mahommed, and in his room place Shah Soojah on the throne.*

* "In October 1838, the author (M. Martin, Esq.), deeply convinced of the unjust and perilous nature of the war, drew up a memorandum which the Marquess Wellesley transmitted to Sir John Cam Hobhouse, then President of the Board of Control. His Lordship subsequently addressed a communication to Sir John against the Affghan war, predicting 'that our difficulties would commence when our military successes ended.' The Duke of Wellington, Mr Mountstuart Elphinstone, Mr Edmonstone, Mr Metcalfe, and other Indian statesmen, took the same view of the question."—M. MARTIN, 435, note.

This was done by the sole authority of the Governor-General and his confidential advisers, then assembled at Simlah to enjoy the cool breezes of the first slopes of the Himalaya during the sultry season; the Supreme Council at Calcutta, though they afterwards adhibited their official consent to the measures, were not, in the first instance, consulted in their preparation. Having taken his resolutions, Lord Auckland was not long in carrying them into effect. After a brief negotiation with the discrowned exile at Loodianah, a tripartite treaty was concluded at Lahore, on the 26th June 1838, between the Governor-General, Runjeet Singh, and Shah Soojah, which, to the infinite astonishment of the latter, provided for his restoration to his ancestral throne. The principal articles of the treaty were, that the British Government and the chiefs of Lahore recognised Shah Soojah as the sovereign of Affghanistan; and he on his part engaged to cede Peshawur, Cashmere, Attock, and their dependencies, to the Rajah of Lahore;* that the rajah undertook to despatch a body of troops to aid in re-establishing the Affghan prince on the throne; that the three contracting powers engaged mutually to defend each other in case of attack; and the Shah promised not to enter into any negotiations with any foreign state without the knowledge and consent of the British and Sikh Governments, and bound himself to "oppose any power having the design to invade the British and Sikh territories by force of arms, to the utmost of his ability." Lastly, Shah Soojah promised not to disturb his nephew, the ruler of Herat, in his territories, and renounced all claim of supremacy over the Ameers of Scinde, who were to remain in possession of their country under the condition only of paying a moderate tribute to Shah Soojah, the amount of which was to be fixed by the British Government.

55. It must be confessed that at first sight the treaty appeared to have conferred as great a benefit upon the Brit-

* These territories were all actually in the possession of Runjeet Singh.

ish as the Sikh Government. It secured the two powerful states of Lahore and Cabul in the English alliance, solved, in appearance at least, the differences between them, and seemed to provide an effective barrier against Muscovite aggression, alike in the mountains of Affghanistan and on the banks of the Indus. But these advantages, so specious in appearance, and not altogether destitute of foundation, in reality were entirely neutralised, and in effect turned into evils, by the inherent injustice with which it was tainted. It professed to regulate everything from views of expedience, and the supposed advantage of the British Government, by treaties concluded only with courts, forgetting that the people also required to be thought of; and that it was an unhallowed mode of cementing an alliance intended to serve as a barrier against Muscovite aggression, to commence with an act of spoliation equal to any of those with which the great northern potentate was charged.

56. It was at first intended to assist Shah Soojah for the recovery of his throne only by a very small British auxiliary force; and with this view it was announced in a proclamation issued by the Governor-General, that the Shah "should enter Affghanistan surrounded by his own troops." To effect this object, 4000 irregulars were raised and placed under the nominal command of Prince Timour, eldest son of Shah Soojah, but really under the direction of British officers, and entirely paid from the British treasury. To this were to be added 6000 Sikhs under the command of Runjeet Singh's generals, who was also to station an army of 15,000 men in observation in the province of Peshawur. These forces, with the aid of the terror and influence of the English name, and the supposed anxiety of the Affghans to regain the rule of their old princes, would, it was hoped, suffice for the change of dynasty in Affghanistan, without imperilling any considerable body of British troops in its terrible defiles. Burnes, though he earnestly counselled that the case of Dost Ma-

hommed should be reconsidered, and that we should act with him * rather than against him, yet gave it as his decided opinion, that if his dethronement was determined on, these measures would be amply sufficient to accomplish the object in view.† But more accurate information soon convinced the Government that these expectations were fallacious, and that if Shah Soojah was really to be restored, it could only be by a British military force capable in reality, and not in name merely, of effecting the entire conquest of Affghanistan. Although, therefore, the assurances were still held out that Shah Soojah should enter Affghanistan surrounded only by his own troops, and relying for his restoration on the loyalty of his subjects, yet, in reality, preparations were made for an expedition of a very different description, and for extending British influence and authority far beyond the Punjab and the Indus, to the distant snows of the Hindoo Coosh.‡

* "It remains to be reconsidered why we cannot act with Dost Mahommed. He is a man of undoubted ability, and has at heart a high opinion of the British nation; and if half of what you must do for others were done for him, and offers made which he could see would conduce to his interests, *he would abandon Russia and Persia to-morrow.* It may be said, that opportunity has been given him; but I would rather discuss this in person with you, for I think there is much to be said for him. Government have admitted that he had at best but a choice of difficulties; and it should not be forgotten that we promised nothing, and Persia and Russia held out a great deal."—CAPTAIN BURNES to GOVERNOR-GENERAL, June 1, 1838; KAYE, i. 340.

† "As for Shah Soojah personally, the British Government have only to send him to Peshawur with an agent, and two of its own regiments as an honorary escort, and an avowal to the Affghans that we have taken up his cause, to insure his *being fixed for ever on the throne.* The Maharajah's opinion has only therefore to be asked on the ex-king's advance to Peshawur, granting him at the same time four or five of the regiments which have no Sikhs in their ranks, and Soojah becomes King."—CAPTAIN BURNES to GOVERNOR-GENERAL, July 3, 1838; KAYE, i. 342.

‡ "His Majesty, Shah Soojah, will enter Affghanistan surrounded by his own troops, and will be supported against foreign interference and factious opposition by a British army. The Governor-General confidently hopes that the Shah will be speedily replaced on his throne by his own subjects and adhe-

57. The force provided for the Affghanistan expedition, when it was finally decided on, was extremely formidable, and much more than sufficient, if it had not been for the difficulties of the country, for the entire and lasting subjugation of Affghanistan. The force destined for the expedition was styled the "Army of the Indus," after the style of Napoleon's bulletins, and by the end of November it was all assembled in the neighbourhood of Ferozepore. It consisted at first of a very large force drawn from Bengal, formed in two divisions, and numbering nearly 28,000 men, which assembled in the neighbourhood of the Sikh forces, and exhibited a stupendous proof of the power and resources of the British in India; for the troops were assembled at the foot of the Himalaya, a thousand miles from Calcutta, and they were attended by nearly 100,000 camp-followers, and 30,000 beasts of burden. Only four European regiments, however, were in this great force—viz., the 13th and Buffs, and 16th Lancers, and the Bengal European regiment. But before the review had ceased, or active operations could be commenced, intelligence arrived of the raising of the siege of Herat, and the retreat of the Persian army: less preparation was

rents; and when once he shall be secured in power, and the independence and integrity of Affghanistan established, the British army will be withdrawn. The Governor-General has been led to these measures by the duty which is imposed upon him of providing for the security of the possessions of the British crown; but he rejoices that in the discharge of that duty he will be enabled to assist in restoring the union and prosperity of the Affghan people. Throughout the approaching operations, British influence will be sedulously employed to further every measure of general benefit, to reconcile differences, to secure oblivion of injuries, and to put an end to the distractions by which, for so many years, the welfare and happiness of the Affghans have been impaired. Even to the chiefs whose hostile proceedings have given just cause of offence to the British Government, it will seek to secure liberal and honourable treatment on their tendering early submission, and ceasing from opposition to that course of measures which may be judged most suitable for the general advantage of their country."—*Proclamation, Oct. 1, 1838; KAYE, i. 359.*

now deemed necessary, and a part only of the assembled force received orders to move forward. It consisted of one division under Sir W. Cotton, composed of three brigades of infantry, two of cavalry, and a considerable number both of siege, horse, and field guns, amounting to 9500 men of all arms. At the same time 6000 more, raised for the immediate service of Shah Soojah, accompanied that prince in his entry into his long-lost dominions. These were to be joined by a division from Bombay under Sir J. Keane, commander of the Bombay army, which was to come round by sea to Kurrachee, and from thence march up the banks of the Indus. It was composed of one brigade of infantry and one of cavalry, with artillery, and included two European regiments of foot and one of horse. Sir Henry Fane, an officer of tried energy and ability, in whom the Bengal army had unbounded confidence, at first had the command-in-chief. But before the march from Ferozepore began, he surrendered the post he held, partly from ill health, partly from thinking there was nothing more to do, into the hands of Sir John Keane, also a veteran of Peninsular fame, but not of the same suavity of temper, nor, equally with his predecessor, known to the troops he was destined to command.

58. Before the army commenced its march, a series of magnificent spectacles, eminently characteristic of Eastern manners and habits, took place on occasion of the meeting of the Governor-General at Ferozepore with the aged chief of Lahore, not inaptly styled "the Lion of the Punjab." On one day the British force was manœuvred by Sir Henry Fane, to the infinite amazement of the Asiatics, who had never seen such movements before; on the next, the Sikhs were exercised in presence of the English officers by their chiefs, and made a most creditable appearance. The meeting of the Governor-General with the Lahore chief, in a place selected for the purpose, about four miles from the river Gharra, presented an unrivalled scene of magnificence and splendour. A noble

guard of honour lined the way, as, amidst the roar of artillery and the clang of military music, Runjeet Singh came forth in the centre of a line of elephants to the Governor-General's tent, who advanced to meet him. So great was the throng, so violent the press, when these two great potentates met, that many of the attendant Sikhs believed there was a design to destroy their chief, "and began to blow their matches and grasp their weapons with a mingled air of distrust and ferocity." Soon, however, a passage was made, and the little decrepit old man was seen tottering into the tent, supported on the one side by the Governor-General, on the other by Sir Henry Fane, whose fine figure strangely contrasted with the bent and worn-out form of the Eastern chieftain. Next day the Maharajah received Lord Auckland in his tent, who returned his visit. The magnificence of the scene then exceeded that of the preceding day, and the Sikhs fairly outdid the British in Oriental splendour. "The brilliant costumes of the Sikh sirdars, the gorgeous trappings of their horses, the glittering steel casques, and corslets of chain armour, the scarlet-and-yellow dresses, the tents of crimson and gold," the long lines of elephants, and still longer squadrons of cavalry, formed an unrivalled spectacle of Eastern magnificence.* But different feelings were awakened, and every British heart beat with emotion, when, in that distant land, the well-known notes of the national anthem arose from a Sikh band, and the guns of the Kalsa thundered forth salute to the representative of Queen Victoria.

59. It was not, however, only in these scenes of splendour that the Affghanistan army was to be engaged. Could the future have been foreseen, the arid march, the muffled drum, the wasted host, would have arisen in mournful solemnity before the dazzled vision. Little anticipating the catastrophe which awaited them, the British officers returned gaily to their tents, charmed with the present, careless of the future. Like the French officers

* KAYE, I. 375.

setting out on the Moscow campaign, they were in the highest spirits, anticipating only a military promenade of six months, to be followed by a speedy return to their quarters at Calcutta or Bombay, and regretting only that the raising of the siege of Herat had deprived them of the laurels won in Russian warfare, with which they hoped to adorn their brows. The plan of campaign was for the Bengal division, preceded by Shah Soojah's contingent, to cross the Indus at Bukhur, and advance through the Bolan Pass to Candahar. There it was to be joined by the Bombay column, which, on its arrival up the Indus at Bukhur, was to follow by the same route. The whole were then to march on Cabul. Meanwhile Prince Timour, accompanied by a Sikh army and Affghan auxiliary force, was to proceed from Peshawur to the same capital by the direct route through the Khyber Pass, the tribes guarding which were to be propitiated by British gold. The march of the Bengal column, under Sir Willoughby Cotton, began on the 10th December, and it was determined that its route should be through Scinde, in a north-westerly direction, to cross the Indus at Bukhur. From thence it was to move by Shikarpoor and Dadur to the mouth of the Bolan Pass, and after surmounting that arduous ascent, to advance by Quettah through the Kojuck Pass to Candahar, and thence by Ghuznee to Cabul. This was a strangely devious course, for the army was to move over two sides of a triangle instead of the third; but the object of taking this circuitous route was to coerce and overawe the Ameers of Scinde, whose hostility was apprehended on good grounds, and who occupied an important military position, commanding the communications of the army.

60. The army of Shah Soojah headed the line of march, in order to keep up the appearance of the movement being a national one, and not supported by foreign bayonets. But a difficulty occurred at the very outset of their career. By the existing treaty with the Ameers of Scinde, it was stipulated

Anxious looks were cast to every green mound in the arid waste, and its base searched by panting crowds in search of the limpid fountain. If a stream was seen glittering through the trees on the side of the road, men, horses, and camels rushed with unbridled impetuosity to the side, and plunged their heads in the refreshing wave, drinking till they nearly burst. Often, when water was to be had only in small quantities, officers even of the highest rank voluntarily shared the much-coveted fluid with the humblest privates, proving that the European had not degenerated from the time when, in the same desert, Alexander the Great, pouring away the helmet filled with water offered to him, quenched the thirst of a whole army.

64. The reception given to Shah Soojah in Candahar was very flattering, and such as to justify in a great degree the assurances held out by Mr Macnaghten as to the disposition of the people to hail with joy the restoration of a prince of the ancient lineage. An immense crowd assembled to greet his approach; there were shouts, and the sound of music, and the noise of firing, and the countenances of the people evinced at least momentary pleasure. In the evening Mr Macnaghten wrote to Lord Auckland—"The Shah made a grand public entry into the city this morning, and was received with feelings amounting nearly to adoration." But the pleasing anticipations formed from this reception were much dispelled by what appeared at a grand review of the army, held a few days after, when the restored monarch first ascended the "musnud," or throne of state. As the Bombay column had come up the pageant was magnificent, and the troops, now recovered from their fatigues, made a brilliant appearance. But there was no enthusiasm in the crowd; "no one said, God bless him." The English officers surrounded the king in their splendid uniforms of scarlet and gold; but few Affghans approached him. Murmurs were openly heard against the Feringhees (infidels), who were come to ex-

terminate the true believers; and it was already evident that the Affghan throne, in the person of Shah Soojah, could be maintained only by British bayonets.

65. Soon after these operations were concluded by the army of Sir John Keane in western Affghanistan, the eastern force, nominally under Prince Timour, but really under Colonel Wade, was engaged in the arduous task of surmounting the Khyber Pass. This was a service of very great difficulty, for not only was the defile of great length and terrific strength, but to force it Wade had only a motley crowd of 6000 Hindoos, Sikhs, and Affghans, upon the fidelity of whom it was impossible to rely. The operation, however, was conducted with more facility than, in the circumstances, could have been expected. The Afreedis who held the pass had had ample time to mature their defences during the long time that the British auxiliary forces lay at Peshawur; but such was the vigour of Wade's operations when he did advance, and such his diplomatic skill, that, partly by force, partly by address, all resistance was overcome. Prince Timour proved a weak, incapable man, who could never, unaided, have led his troops through the Khyber; but his deficiencies were amply supplied by the energy and ability of the British officers in command of the expedition. The pass was surmounted with but a desultory resistance, in overcoming which, however, the troops, regular and irregular, evinced the greatest spirit, and the Sikhs in particular gave token of those martial qualities which were destined ere long to try to the uttermost the prowess of the British soldier in the field. On the 25th July the fortress of Ali-Musjid, which commands the entrance of the defile, was invested, and on the following day it yielded to the well-directed fire of the guns under Lieut. Barr of the Bengal artillery. This success, and the imposing aspect of the army which swept through the pass, broke up the confederacy of the tribes who were inclined to dispute

arose from the obstacles and impediments of nature. : But they were so great as to occasion a very severe loss to the army, and such as, if combined with any serious resistance from man, would have rendered the passage impracticable. The pass is nearly sixty miles in length, of continued and often very rapid ascent, shut in with stupendous precipices or wooded cliffs on either side. The joyful sound of rushing waters was here to be heard; but it little availed the thirsty troops, for the torrent which roared by their side was polluted by the multitude of dead camels which had fallen or been thrown into it by the advanced columns. The road was composed of sharp flint stones, which lamed the cattle, and such as fell behind were immediately seized by the marauding tribes which infested the flanks and rear of the army. The line of march was strewn with baggage, abandoned tents, and stores; and luxuries which a few weeks before or after would have fetched their weight in gold, were cast aside, or left to be trampled down by the cattle in the rear. At length the worn-out troops emerged from the pass, and beheld with unspeakable joy the open mountain-valley of Shawl spread out before them. "The clear crisp climate," says an eye-witness, "braced the European frame; and over the wide plain, bounded by noble mountain-ranges, intersected by many sparkling streams, and dotted with orchards and vineyards, the eye ranged with delight; while the well-known carol of the lark, mounting up in the fresh morning air, broke with many home associations charmingly on the English ear." *

63. On the 26th March the Bengal column reached Quettah, a miserable town, presenting no supplies whatever to the troops; and then the difficulties of his position began painfully to present themselves to the commanding officer. Here Sir Willoughby Cotton had orders to wait for further instructions; but this had become nearly impossible, for the supplies of the army were becoming very low, and although they were doled out in the scantiest

* Havelock, quoted by KAYE, I. 408.

measure to the unfortunate soldiers and camp-followers, yet they could not, even by the most rigid economy, be made to last much longer. The loaf of the European soldier was diminished in weight; the native troops received only a pound, the camp-followers half a pound, of flour a-day. Starvation stared them all in the face. In this extremity Captain Burnes repaired to Khelat, and by the promise of ample subsidies obtained from the khan of that place some trifling supplies of grain and camels, but adequate only to the wants of a few days. In truth, food could not be found in the country. The inhabitants were subsisting on herbs and grasses gathered in the jungle. It was only by bringing down sheep from the higher mountains that any addition to the subsistence of the army could be obtained. To push on as rapidly as possible, and reach a more fruitful region, was the only course which could be followed; but though Cotton acted with promptitude and decision, he was forced to wait till Sir J. Keane, who had now quitted the Bombay column, came up and assumed the command. This he did on the 4th April. Then the army advanced rapidly through the Kojuck Pass; and at length, on the 25th April, Shah Soojah, accompanied by the British officers, reached Candahar, the second city in his dominions, and the wearied troops found rest and food in a fruitful country. The losses in the march, though wholly unopposed, had been enormous: 20,000 beasts of burden had perished, whose remains had for long furnished the chief food to the troops, whose ordinary rations had been reduced to a fourth part of their usual amount. The sufferings of the men, and still more of the animals, during the latter part of the march, were indescribable; and never before had been seen how dependent is man on the vital element of water. Horses, already half starved for want of grain and grass, were throughout the day panting in all the agonies of thirst; and in the evening a few drops of liquid could not be obtained even to mix the medicines of the sick in the hospitals.

Anxious looks were cast to every green mound in the arid waste, and its base searched by panting crowds in search of the limpid fountain. If a stream was seen glittering through the trees on the side of the road, men, horses, and camels rushed with unbridled impetuosity to the side, and plunged their heads in the refreshing wave, drinking till they nearly burst. Often, when water was to be had only in small quantities, officers even of the highest rank voluntarily shared the much-coveted fluid with the humblest privates, proving that the European had not degenerated from the time when, in the same desert, Alexander the Great, pouring away the helmet filled with water offered to him, quenched the thirst of a whole army.

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the passage: some drew off their forces in despair; others opened their doors to the magic of a golden key. Akbar Khan, who commanded the force posted by Dost Mahommed at Jellalabad to defend the pass, was recalled to aid in the defence of Cabul, now threatened from the west by Keane. All opposition was finally overcome, and on the 3d September, Wade and Prince Timour reached the capital, which had previously been occupied by Sir John Keane's forces.

66. The commencement of this formidable war, and the plunging so large a part of the British forces into the distant defiles of Affghanistan, produced an immense sensation in India, and evinced the treacherous surface on which the British Government was reposing in fancied security. The native states on the borders were beginning to evince signs of feverish anxiety. From the hills of Nepaul to the jungles of Burmah came threats, at first smothered, but ere long openly uttered, of invasion. Even in our own provinces, and those longest subjected to our rule, there was an uneasy restless feeling among all classes—the well-known and often unaccountable precursor of external catastrophe or internal revolution. This feeling was peculiarly strong among the Mussulman inhabitants, forming above fifteen millions in the upper provinces. It was akin to that which, eight-and-thirty years before, had alarmed Marquess Wellesley, when Zeman Shah threatened a descent from the mountains with the whole forces of central Asia, to exterminate the haughty infidels who had so long oppressed the land. In their eyes the approaching conflict assumed the air of a religious crusade. It was believed that the Feringhees were preparing to scale the mountains—"the native guardians of the land"—in order to exterminate the race of true believers in their strongholds, but that the followers of the Prophet would rise up in countless multitudes, repel the vain assault, pour down over the plains of the Punjab and the Ganges, and wrest all the country, from the Indus to the sea,

from the infidel usurpers. So general were these feelings, so common the panic excited, that they formed the topic of conversation in the bazaars of Calcutta and Bombay, and occasioned a serious decline in the value of the public securities.*

67. But whatever might be the expectations and hopes of the Hindoo and Mohammedan powers in India, the march of events, in the first instance at least, was very different, and a signal triumph awaited the arms of Christendom in the very cradle of the rule of the Crescent in central Asia. The army of Sir John Keane remained in Candahar for two months. This halt was indispensable, not only to enable the troops to recover from the toils and hardships of their long and exhausting march, but more especially to collect supplies from the rear sufficient to subsist them in their advance. It was, however, expedient to press forward, and take advantage of the disunion and consternation which the rapid advance and unexpected successes of the British army had occasioned among the Affghanistan tribes. The bloodless fall of Candahar had struck terror into the souls of the partisans of Dost Mahommed, though it had been expected by that sagacious chief himself, who was well aware it was the stronghold of the Douranee dynasty. But he had never anticipated the successful passage of the Bolan and Kojuk Passes; still less that the terrors of the far-famed Khyber should have been surmounted by a mere motley array of Asiatics, led only by European officers. Disunion evidently prevailed in the country; the hopes of Feringhee gold had done more than the dread of the Feringhee bayonets. A powerful force was advancing against his capital, both by the eastern and western passes; he was obliged to divide his troops in order to oppose them, and he knew not on whom, in this strait, he could rely to repel the threatened invasion. His empire was crumbling to pieces before his eyes. This state of things made it advisable to press upon the enemy before he had recovered from

* Compressed from KAYE, i. 290.

his consternation, and accordingly Sir John Keane, upon the arrival of the necessary supplies in camp, set out on the 27th June on his march for Cabul by the route of GHUZNEE.

68. This far-famed fortress lies on the direct road from Candahar to Cabul, distant two hundred and thirty miles from the former, and ninety from the latter. The whole country on either side through which the road passes is open and level, fruitful, comparatively abounding with supplies, and presenting no obstacles to an advancing army. The town itself is inferior, both in importance and population, to either of these capital cities; but the strength of its citadel, which was universally deemed impregnable in Asia, as well as its position, commanding the principal road to Cabul, rendered it, in a military point of view, a post of the highest importance. The rampart, which is sixty feet in height, of good masonry, is built on a scarped mount, thirty-five feet high, rising from a wet ditch, and defended by numerous towers, a *fausse-braye*, and a skilfully-constructed outwork on the river face. The interior of the town by no means corresponds to this imposing exterior. Situated on the extreme point of a low range of hills, it is composed of mean houses and narrow streets; but the citadel contains spacious squares overshadowed by lofty trees, handsome palaces, and stabling for an entire brigade of cavalry. The governor of the place, Hyder Khan, had a large garrison of trusty troops under his command. To guard against the gates being blown open, as had so often been done by the British in Indian warfare, they were all walled up, except the one to the northward leading to Cabul. The ramparts were lofty and massy, incapable of being breached but by heavy artillery and regular approaches. Dost Mahommed never supposed that the English general would attempt the reduction of a place of such strength, least of all by a *coup-de-main*. He thought they would mask it, and push forward towards Cabul, where he was prepared to meet them.

With this view he had largely strengthened the garrison, and stationed a body of irregular horse on the hills in the neighbourhood, who were to sally forth and threaten the communications and rear of the invaders, while he himself arrested them in front, in a strong position which he had occupied twenty miles in front of Cabul, and commanding all the approaches to that city.

69. But Dost Mahommed's well-conceived plan was entirely defeated by the vigour and celerity of the British commander, who, although he had left his battering-train behind, had no intention of merely masking Ghuznee. Abdool Rached Khan, a nephew of Dost Mahommed, had joined the British army on its approach to the fortress. He was a man of intelligence, and well acquainted with the fortifications; and he revealed to Major Thomson, the chief engineer, the important secret of the weak point where an assault might be hazarded with a prospect of success. Before the attack was made, however, a deplorable event occurred, which demonstrated both the desperate character of the fanatics with whom we had to deal, and the revengeful disposition of the sovereign whom we were striving to put on the throne. A band of frantic Mohammedans, named Ghazees, incited by the priests, had poured down upon Shah Soojah's camp, and were met and defeated by Nicolson's native horse and Outram's foot, and their holy standard, with fifty prisoners, was taken. They were brought into the presence of Shah Soojah, and then, after reviling the king in his own presence, one of them actually stabbed one of the royal attendants under his very eyes. Upon this Shah Soojah ordered *them all* to be put to death, and they were hacked to pieces at his feet. This atrocious massacre was never forgotten in Affghanistan; it increased the indisposition of the people to receive the sovereign sought to be forced upon them, and led to an awful retribution, when the Affghans got the upper hand. "The day of reckoning came at last; and when our unholy policy

sank buried in blood and ashes, the shrill cry of the Ghazee sounded as its funeral wail."*

70. Relying upon the important information obtained from Abdool Khan, Sir John Keane and Major Thomson resolved upon an attempt to blow in the Cabul gate, and carry the place by a *coup-de-main* at daybreak on the 23d July. For this purpose a storming party was formed, consisting of the light companies of the four European regiments, the 2d, 13th, and 17th, with the Company's European regiment, who formed the advance, followed by the other companies of the same regiments in support. The advance was under the command of Colonel Dennie of the 13th regiment, the support under Brigadier-General Sale. The night was dark and gusty; the wind wailed aloud, but its blasts were drowned in the roar of the field-artillery, which kept up a heavy fire at random upon the ramparts, on the side opposite to that where the assault was intended to be made. Meanwhile the stormers were silently formed on the Cabul road, and at three in the morning all was ready for the assault. Beguiled by the false attack, the Affghans manned all the ramparts against which the fire was directed, and a row of blue lights suddenly lit up along the walls, showed that they expected and were prepared for an escalade. But the assailants were not idle during this violent cannonade. In profound silence and unobserved, under cover of the darkness, they silently piled the powder-bags against the Cabul gate under the orders of Captain Peat of the Bombay Engineers, whose coolness in the perilous enterprise was most conspicuous; the fusee was fired by Lieutenant Durand, and the explosion took place. Above the blasts of the tempest and the roar of the artillery, the mighty sound was heard by all, whether in the city or the camp, and every eye was turned towards the quarter from which it rolled. A column of black smoke was seen to arise; down with a heavy crash came the huge masses of ma-

* KAYE, i. 445.

sonry and rent beams which had been lifted up; and amidst the silence which followed the awful sound, a bugle was heard sounding the advance.* On rushed Dennie at the head of his gallant band into the scene of ruin; the opening was gained before the defenders could man it, and soon the bayonets of the British were crossing with the swords of the Affghans. A few moments of mortal strife took place in the dark, but the British gained ground, they caught a glimpse of the first streaks of dawn on the eastern sky within the walls, and soon three loud choers—so loud that they were heard through the whole camp—announced that the stormers had entered Ghuznee.

71. But the fortress, though entered, was not yet taken. Sale was eagerly advancing with the main column in support, when he met an engineer officer who had been blown down by the explosion, who reported that the entrance was blocked up by the ruins, and that Dennie could not force his way in. Uncertain what to do, Sale halted his column, and a short interval of doubt and anxiety took place. But soon the bugle was again heard sounding the advance, where a desperate strife awaited the assailants. The Affghans, now thoroughly alarmed, and aware of the scene of danger, came crowding in from all quarters to the gate, and a scene of matchless horror and confusion ensued. Dennie, with his small but dauntless band, was holding his ground with invincible tenacity, and pouring in volley after volley on the infuriated crowd. Into the midst of the throng Sale rushed at the head of his men; he was cut down by the sabre of an Affghan, but after a desperate struggle he regained his feet, and clove his opponent's head, by one blow, to the teeth. The support under Colonel Croker dashed on, followed by the reserve under Colonel Orchard; the pass was won, and ere

* Peat, though hurt by the concussion, instantly ran forward, and, finding the gate blown in, made the signal for the stormers to advance.—*United Service Journal*, February 1840.

long the colours of the 13th and 17th were seen waving above the smoke in the strong morning breeze.* A loud cheer burst from the camp of the besiegers at the joyful sight, which was re-echoed by fearful cries from the fortress, for the Affghans rushed, sword in hand, from their covers, and plied their sabres with frantic resolution against the bayonets of the assailants. A terrible strife, a fearful carnage, took place before the fortress was completely won: but in the hour of triumph mercy was not forgotten; the unresisting were spared, the women were respected, and not an inmate of Hyder Khan's zenana suffered outrage.

72. The fall of Ghuznee, which was immediately followed by the capture of the governor, Hyder Khan, and such of the garrison as had not been slain in the assault, 1600 in number, was a mortal stroke to Dost Mahommed. The booty taken was immense; vast stores of ammunition, guns, and provisions fell into the hands of the victors, who had only to lament the loss of seventeen killed and a hundred and sixty-five wounded; of these, eighteen were officers—an unusually large proportion, affording decisive proof how gallantly they had conducted themselves in the desperate struggle. Five hundred bodies of the Affghans were buried in the town, besides a great number who fell under the sabres of the cavalry in the pursuit. But the moral effects of the victory were even greater than its material results. Having been universally considered as impregnable, and the principal bulwark of Affghanistan, its rapid and apparently easy capture diffused universal consternation. It struck terror into the intrepid soul of Dost Mahommed, who thenceforward became impressed with the idea that the British were invincible, and that it was in vain to contend with the evident decree of destiny in their favour. Afzul Khan, one of his sons, who was hovering in the neighbourhood, prepared to fall on the

beaten army, was struck with such terror, when he saw the British colours waving on the ramparts of the far-famed citadel, that, abandoning his baggage, elephants, and camp-equipment, which fell into the hands of the victors, he fled back to Cabul. Nothing remained capable of arresting the British in their march to the capital.

73. Thither accordingly they advanced, after a halt of a few days at Ghuznee. Dost Mahommed, with a resolution worthy of the highest admiration, desired all who wavered in their allegiance to leave his camp, and himself moved forward, with such as he thought he could rely on, to Urghundch, where he parked his artillery and prepared to give battle. But it was evidently in vain; the seeds of dissolution were sown in his army. The venal Kuzilbashs, the treacherous Affghans, were fast deserting his camp. All sought to pay their court to the victors: it was the counterpart of Napoleon at Fontainebleau. He besought them to make a stand, and rally like true believers around the standard of the Prophet, but it was in vain. "You have eaten my salt," he said, "for thirteen years. It is too plain you are resolved to seek a new master; grant me but one favour in requital for that long period of maintenance and kindness; enable me to die with honour; stand by the brother of Futteh Khan while he executes one last charge against the cavalry of these Feringhee dogs; in that onset he will fall; then go and make your own terms with Shah Soojah."* But the heart-stirring appeal was made in vain: none responded to it; terror or treachery had frozen every heart. With tears in his eyes, the gallant chief turned his horse's head, and, abandoning his recreant followers, fled northwards to the wilds of the Hindoo Coosh, to seek in its icy solitudes, and amidst the savage Oosbegs, beyond the Bamian Pass, that fidelity which he could no longer hope to find among his own countrymen.

74. A detachment of cavalry, under Captain Outram, who volunteered for

* The colours of the 13th were first planted on the ramparts by Ensign Frere, nephew of the Hon. John Hookham Frere.

* HAVELOCK.

the service, dashed off in pursuit of Dost Mahommed, and for several days had him almost in sight. He would certainly have been taken, had not an Affghan chief, Hadjee Khan, who had betrayed Dost Mahommed and undertaken to be their guide, proved a second time a traitor, and purposely delayed the march to give his former master time to escape. The British army broke up from Ghuznee on the 30th July, and after an unresisted march of eight days, arrived before Cabul, which they entered in triumph on the 7th August. Gorgeous in gay apparel, glittering with jewels, and surrounded by a brilliant staff, in which the scarlet and gold of the English uniforms shone forth conspicuous, Shah Soojah traversed the city of his fathers, and proudly ascended the Bala-Hissar, the venerated palace of his race. But though a vast crowd was assembled to witness his entry, there was no popular enthusiasm, no indication of a gratified national wish. Slowly, and in majestic pomp, and with the air rather of conquerors than allies, the procession wound up the ascent. But when they reached the summit, and entered the gates of the palace, the dethroned monarch's joy could no longer be concealed. With almost infantine delight, he went through all the long-left but forgotten rooms and gardens, and received with undisguised transports the congratulations of the British officers upon his restoration to his dominions.*

75. The unexpected and rapid success of the British army in Affghanistan, and the restoration of Shah Soojah to what was fondly hoped to be an undisputed throne, gave the greatest satisfaction to the British Government and people. Honours and rewards were showered with a liberal but not undeserved hand on the officers engaged in the expedition. Lord Auckland was advanced to the dignity of earl; Sir John Keane was made a peer, with a pension of £2000 a-year; Mr Macnaghten and Col.

* FROM KAYE, I. 460, 461.

Henry Pottinger were made baronets; Col. Wade, a knight; while Sir Willoughby Cotton, Col. Sale, and several others, were created Knights Commanders of the Bath. The splendour of the success, and the comparatively small loss with which it had been achieved, stifled for a season the voice of discontent; and though the Duke of Wellington, Marquess Wellesley, and a few other sagacious observers, still maintained that our difficulties were only about to commence, and that we had better take warning from the fate of the Moscow expedition, yet the great majority gave way to no such apprehensions, and fondly hoped that, after reposing a while on its laurels, the force engaged, leaving Shah Soojah, a faithful and devoted ally, firmly seated on the throne, with the keys of India in his hand, would return in safety to the plains of Hindostan.

76. Meanwhile Colonel Wade, with the force which had passed the Khyber, after making itself master, on the way, of Jellalabad, arrived at Cabul on the 3d of September, so that an imposing array of 15,000 men, British and auxiliaries, was assembled in the Affghanistan capital. This large force enabled Sir John Keane to extend his detachments in different directions up the valleys of Affghanistan, one of which, advancing to the foot of the Hindoo Coosh, and up the pass to Bamian, chased Dost Mahommed over its snowy summit, to seek an asylum amidst the huts of the distant Oosbegs. To appearance, the country was not only entirely subdued, but in a great measure tranquillised; and though a few small expeditionary parties were cut off, yet this was no more than might have been expected in a mountainous country, amidst a warlike people, upon whom a new government had been violently imposed by foreign bayonets. Supplies came in on all sides in great abundance. The never-failing magnet of gold drew forth all the resources of the country, and the refractory chiefs were every day sending in their adhesion.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

AFFGHANISTAN RETREAT.

1. IN the midst of these flattering appearances, however, there was no solid ground for confidence; and not the least part of the embarrassment of the Indian Government arose from the very magnitude and decisive nature of its success. Shah Soojah, it was true, was seated on the throne, and from his palace on the Bala-Hissar might view without immediate alarm the figure of Dost Mahommed flitting behind the clouds and snows of the Bamian Pass, amidst the uncouth and shivering Oosbegs. But it had already become evident that he had no confidence in his own position, that he was unpopular with the great majority of his countrymen, and that the withdrawal of the British troops would be the immediate signal for his fall. If so, the restored government of Dost Mahommed would immediately, alike from policy and the desire of revenge, ally itself in the closest manner with Russia, and the whole objects of the expedition would not only be lost, but the very danger enhanced which it was its chief object to avert. Yet how was the army to be kept in its present position in Affghanistan without a strain upon the Indian empire, which its resources, great as they were, might prove incapable of standing? The country now occupied by the British troops was of great extent, a thousand miles from its base of operations in Hindostan, and inhabited by warlike and hostile tribes inured to warfare, and with arms in their hands, which they well knew how to wield. To retain a great force in such a situation would prove an irremediable drain upon the resources of India, and to leave a small one only was to expose it to imminent hazard of being cut off.

2. Lord Auckland, after carefully

reviewing every side of this difficult question, was of opinion that, although the British army beyond the Indus could not with safety be entirely withdrawn, yet it would be sufficient to leave an auxiliary force of five or six regiments to aid in keeping Shah Soojah on the throne. To carry into execution this design, it was proposed to withdraw the Bombay Army entire by the Bolau Pass, and a portion of that of Bengal by the Khyber, leaving British troops at Cabul and Candahar to support the government, and in Ghuznee and Quettah on the west, and Jellalabad and Ali-Musjid on the east. These designs were only partially carried into effect. The Bombay column indeed set out on the 18th September, but it was found to be necessary to leave a much larger force of the Bengal army in the country than was at first intended. The general orders announcing the ultimate decision of Government were looked for with much anxiety, and they at length made their appearance on the 2d October. A comparatively small force, consisting of the 16th lancers, with two regiments of native horse and a large part of the horse-artillery, was to return to India under Sir John Keane; but the whole of the 1st division of Bengal infantry was to remain in Affghanistan. The 13th Queen's regiment of infantry, with a sepoy regiment, was to garrison Cabul; two sepoy corps to hold Candahar. Ghuznee and Jellalabad were to be strongly occupied by native regiments. Sir Willoughby Cotton was intrusted with the command-in-chief. The forces in Ghuznee were under the immediate command of Major M'Laren, those in Candahar of General Nott. In addition to this, a detachment of infantry, with a troop of horse-artil-

lery under Lieutenant Murray Mackenzie, with a Ghoorka regiment, was sent forward to the very extremity of the Shah's dominions to the northward, to keep an eye upon Dost Mahomed, who had found refuge among the Oosbegs on the other side of the lofty mountain-range of the Hindoo Coosh. This little army, by incredible exertions, made its way through these dreary wildernesses, reached the Pass of Bamian in safety, and prepared to pass the winter in caverns, amidst the ice and snow of the great Caucasian range.*

3. The homeward march of the Bombay army was signalised by the capture of the strong fortress of Khelat, the Khan of which was judged to have merited deposition by the hostility and treachery he had shown. The citadel, which stands on a high rock, overlooks the town; and on the north were three heights of nearly equal elevation, which the Khan had lined with infantry, supported by five guns in position. The attacking force consisted of the 2d and 17th regiments, a native regiment, six guns, and a detachment of local force, under General Willshire. The assault was directed, in the first instance, against the infantry on the hills, and the shrapnell shells from Stephenson's guns soon compelled them to seek refuge in the walls of the fortress. The guns were immediately pushed forward to within two hundred yards of the gate, notwithstanding a heavy fire from the Beloochee matchlockmen; and after playing for some time, it at last gave way. Pointing to the cleared entrance, Willshire gave the word to advance, and the British soldiers, springing up with a loud cheer from the rocks and bushes by which they had been covered, rushed forward, headed by Pen-yuick and his men, to the assault. The other companies quickly followed, and the entrance was won; but a desperate struggle ensued before the citadel was taken, for every inch of the ground was manfully contested. At its entrance Mehrab Khan and his

* This is the detachment alluded to in the last paragraph of the preceding chapter.

chiefs stood, sword in hand, prepared to give battle for his last stronghold. But nothing could in the end stand the fierce attack of the British. Volley after volley was poured in by the leading companies with deadly precision of aim; the Khan and eight of his principal officers fell dead or wounded; and at length, being convinced by Lieutenant Loveday, who went up alone to a parley, that further resistance was vain, they surrendered at discretion. The loss of the British was thirty-two officers and men killed, and one hundred and seven wounded.

4. The autumn and winter which succeeded this brilliant campaign passed pleasantly to the officers and men of the army of the Indus. The fine climate, which felt deliciously cool after the sultry gales of Hindostan, the keen bracing air, the fine forests and finer scenery, the ice-cold water of the environs of Cabul, rendered the place at first an earthly paradise to men who had been toiling for months under a burning sun, in a long and fatiguing march from the plains of India. There were shows, spectacles, and amusements: the officers rode races, to the no small astonishment of the Affghans; reviews on a grand scale, and with princely magnificence, were held; and the king, who delighted in spectacles of pageantry, established an order of knighthood, and distributed the insignia, to the persons selected to receive them, with grace and dignity. Amidst these scenes of festivity and amusement the time passed pleasantly away, as it ever does when it "only treads on flowers;" and the officers who were left, deeming the campaign at an end, and that they were only destined to reap its fruits, sent for their wives, and scarcely envied those who, on the 18th September, commenced their march back to India by the route of the Kojuk and Bolan Passes.

5. But the thorns were not long of showing themselves; and the British officers were soon taught to their cost, that their military occupation of Affghanistan was not to be entirely of a

peaceful character. The detachments sent out in different directions did not meet with any open opposition in the field, but they soon found that they were surrounded by secret enemies, and that the great majority of the clans wanted only a leader, and some prospect of success, to break out into insurrection. Even in the capital, notwithstanding the presence of government and five thousand British troops, and the occupation of the Bala-Hissar, impregnable to the whole forces of Cabul, unmistakable symptoms of discontent appeared. The prices of everything had risen seriously, in some articles doubled—the necessary result of a commissariat which, at extravagant prices, bought up all provisions within their reach; and all this, which told severely upon the poorer classes, was set down, not without justice, to the hated presence of the Feringhees. Severe oppression was exercised by Prince Timour's troops on the natives, which at length reached such a pitch that General Nott, at Candahar, flogged one of the marauders in his train in his own presence.* The evils of a tripartite government, almost equally divided between Shah Soojah, the nominal sovereign; Sir William Macnaghten, the political agent; and Sir Wil- loughby Cotton, the military commander-in-chief, were already beginning to be experienced. Power so divided became impotent. Responsibility was no longer felt when it could so easily be devolved on another. To these many sources of danger were ere long added others, less formidable in appearance, but scarcely less so in their ultimate results. The idle hours of the officers were soon beguiled by more exciting pursuits than the race-course; the zenana presented greater attractions than the hunting-field; and the general partiality of beauty for military success inflicted wounds on the Afghan chiefs more painful than those of the sword, and excited a thirst for vengeance more intolerable than the subjugation of their country, or the forcible change of their government.

* Nott's *Memoirs* by Stocqueler, vol. i. 195, 219.

6. While difficulties were thus besetting the English army in Affghanistan, the early and unlooked-for success of the expedition had fixed the attention and excited the jealousy of the Cabinet of St Petersburg. Something was expected to be done to re-establish Russian influence in central Asia, and counterbalance the check it had received from the failure before Herat, and the triumphant march of the British to Affghanistan. For this purpose advantage was taken of numerous acts of violence committed by the Khiva chiefs upon the Russian merchants carrying on trade with central Asia, and who had been, in a great many instances, slain or carried into captivity by those ruthless marauders, to demand reparation and the punishment of the offenders; and upon this being refused or delayed, an expedition was prepared to invade and occupy the country.* The Russians had ample cause for aggression—much more so than the English had for their expedition into Affghanistan—and, like it, they shared the fate of all the incursions which the powers of Europe have made into central Asia. After gaining, as is usually the case, considerable advantages in the outset, it was entirely defeated, and with frightful loss in the end. The climate, the snows, pestilence, famine, and the inconceivable difficulties of the land-carriage, proved fatal to a powerful body of brave men, 6000 strong, with twelve guns, amply provided with all the muniments of war, very few of

* "Not one of the Russian caravans can now cross the desert without danger. It was in this manner that a Russian caravan from Orenburg, with goods belonging to our merchants, was pillaged by the armed bands of Khiva. No Russian merchant can now venture into that country without running the risk of losing his life or being made a prisoner. The inhabitants of Khiva are constantly making incursions into that part of the country of the Kirghiz which is at a distance from our lines, and, to crown all these insults, they are detaining several thousand Russian subjects in slavery. The number of these unfortunate wretches increases daily, for the peaceful fishermen on the banks of the Caspian are continually attacked and carried off as slaves to Khiva."—*Proclamation of Emperor*, October 28, 1839; *Moniteur*, 14th November 1839.

whom ever returned to tell the melancholy tale of their disasters to their countrymen.

7. Scarcely was the British Government in India relieved from the dread awakened by this apparition of the Muscovite battalions on the tableland of central Asia, when they had more serious grounds for apprehension from the difficulties in Affghanistan, which were daily thickening around them. The skill of the British officers, however, who were in command of the different detachments which occupied the country, the bravery of the troops employed under them, and the superiority of their arms, especially in artillery, of which the Affghans were nearly destitute, for long chained victory to their standards, and preserved the country to appearance quiet, when in reality convulsed with angry passions. Favourable accounts at first came in from nearly all quarters. The Bamian Pass was occupied without resistance; the Khyber, though not without much fighting and considerable loss, was kept open by the aid of detachments from Jellalabad and the downward passage of Keane's force; and so confident was Macnaghten that the country was quietly settling down under the restored rule of the Douranee princes, that he sent for his wife from Hindostan, and despatched a body of horse under Edward Conolly to escort her from the plains of India. In vain Nott warned the Government of the coming dangers: his voice, as is generally the case with advice at variance with preconceived opinions, was disregarded.

8. Meanwhile intelligence of the most disquieting nature was received from Herat. The liberality of the British Government to its Khan had been extreme; twelve lacs of rupees (£120,000) had been sent to its ruler, and two men of distinguished ability, Captains Todd and Shakespeare of the artillery, with Mr Abbot of the same corps, had been long in the city to superintend the expenditure of that large sum on the fortifications. But in spite of all that they could do, great

part of the money was misapplied or wasted by the venal or corrupt Affghan authorities, and at length it was discovered that the vizier, Yar Mahommed, while living in affluence on British bounty, was superadding to his innumerable other treacheries that of intriguing with the Persians. So evident was the perfidy of this hoary traitor, that Macnaghten did not hesitate to recommend offensive measures against him, and the annexation of his state to the dominions of Shah Soojah. But Lord Auckland, who had his hands sufficiently full nearer home, and was beginning to feel, in the ceaseless demands for men and money from Affghanistan, the cost of operations in those distant mountain regions, wisely declined the proposal, and endeavoured to effect the object by increased advances of money. These Yar Mahommed willingly received, and meanwhile continued his intrigues with the Persian Government, and carried his effrontery so far as actually to boast, in a letter to Mahommed Shah, the Persian ruler, which was afterwards laid before the Governor-General, that he was cajoling the English, who were freely spending their money at Herat while he was throwing himself into the arms of Persia.

The accounts from the Punjab also were of a kind to excite some apprehensions, and evince the immensely increased circle of hostility in which the operations beyond the Indus had involved the British Government. The old chief who had founded the empire of Lahore, and, amidst all his faults to others, had ever been faithful in his alliance with the English, had expired shortly before the entrance of our troops into Cabul, and Nao-Nahal Singh, and the Sikh chiefs generally, who had succeeded to his power, were by no means equally well disposed towards them. The continued and apparently interminable passage of troops through their territories had naturally excited their jealousy; and they asked themselves, not without reason, what chance the Sikh monarchy had of

maintaining its independence, if the British power was established in a permanent manner in Affghanistan, and their dominions were used only as a stepping-stone betwixt it and Hindostan? Symptoms of disaffection had appeared in the auxiliary Sikh forces; one entire regiment had turned about when led to the attack of the Khyber, and never ceased flying till they were out of the pass; and the demands of the Sikh authorities for money, on account of the alleged damage done by the passage of the troops, were daily increasing. Already Macnaghten had declared, that unless the proceedings of their generals were checked, he did not see how a rupture with the Sikhs was to be avoided, and that "we should be in a very awkward predicament, unless measures are adopted for *macadamising the road through the Punjab.*" *

10. In the mean time, affairs in Affghanistan itself were daily becoming more alarming. The Ghilzyes, a clan peculiarly hostile to the Douranee dynasty, were in open arms between Candahar and Cabul, and had entirely cut off the communication between these two places. Captain Anderson of the Bengal artillery, with a regiment of foot, four guns, and three hundred horse, attacked a body of two thousand of them on the 16th May, and defeated them, after an obstinate fight, with great slaughter. This victory for a time stifled the insurrection in that quarter, but it only tended to increase the smothered hostility of the Ghilzyes, which was daily spreading and becoming more inveterate. The southern provinces, lying between Candahar and the Indus, were all in a blaze. Quettah was besieged, Kahun invested by the insurgents, and the newly-won fortress of Khelat was wrested from the chief to whom it had been assigned by the British, and Captain Loveday, who had distinguished himself in the assault, barbarously murdered by the Beloochees, who had risen in arms. Yet, amidst all these serious and daily increasing difficulties, which threatened in so

* KATE, I. 515.

alarming a manner his rear and communications, Macnaghten still persisted in the belief that nothing formidable was to be apprehended; that Affghanistan might be considered as pacified; and that now was the time to consolidate British power in central Asia, by an expedition against Herat, and its annexation to the dominions of Shah Soojah.

11. During the summer of 1840, the detachment which had been sent to the Bamian Pass to watch the movements of Dost Mahommed, and had passed the winter amidst ice and snow in the caverns of that inhospitable region, was released from its forced inactivity, and, pushing a party across the great mountain-range, occupied the fort of Rajgah, which was found deserted, on the other side. But it soon became apparent that the occupation of this distant and isolated fort, surrounded by a hostile population, had been a mistake. Two companies of the Shah's Ghoorka regiment, which formed its garrison, sent out on the 2d August to escort an officer into it, were met by a superior body of Oosbeg horsemen, and only rescued from destruction, after having sustained a severe loss, by the opportune arrival of reinforcements despatched from the fort to extricate them. Meanwhile Dost Mahommed had been thrown into prison by the cruel and perfidious Khan of Bokhara, with whom he had taken refuge. He nearly fell a victim to a treacherous attempt upon his life; and having afterwards made his escape, his horse fell dead from fatigue, and he avoided detection only by dyeing his beard with ink, and joining a caravan which he accidentally overtook. At length he succeeded in joining the Wullee of Khooloom, an old ally, who received him in his misfortune with unshaken fidelity. Sheltered by this supporter, he again raised the standard of independence, and the Oosbegs having all flocked around him, he early in September advanced towards the Bamian Pass at the head of six thousand men. When reminded that his wives and children were in the hands of the British, he replied, "I have no

family; I have buried my wives and children."*

12. This fresh inroad of Dost Mahommed was soon attended with serious consequences, and excited the utmost alarm in the whole northern provinces of Afghanistan. Surrounded by an insurgent and inveterately hostile population, it was soon found to be impossible to maintain the posts which had been occupied beyond the Hindoo Coosh, and accordingly both Rajgah and Syghan were evacuated by the Ghoorka regiment which held them, who retired, after sustaining severe loss, to Bamian. An Affghan regiment, which had been raised to support Shah Soojah, openly went over to the enemy. These successes spread the flame all through Affghanistan; the ferment soon became very great, both in Cabul and Candahar; and it was universally believed that Dost Mahommed had raised the whole strength of central Asia to the south of the Oxus, and was advancing with an innumerable army across the Hindoo Coosh to exterminate the Feringhee dogs, who were devouring the land of the true believers. So far did the panic proceed, that people in Cabul shut up their shops, and began to pack up or hide their effects; and the military authorities, to be prepared for the worst, occupied a gate of the Bala-Hissar by a company of British soldiers.

13. But at this very time, when affairs appeared most alarming, and the star of Dost Mahommed seemed again in the ascendant, an unexpected event occurred, which entirely changed the aspect of affairs, and postponed for a year the final catastrophe. His first step in advance had proved eminently unfortunate. Advancing, on the 18th September, with his brave but undisciplined Oosbegs, down the valley of Bamian, he was met by Lieutenant Murray Mackenzie, with two companies of sepoy, two of Ghoorkas, two guns, and four hundred Affghan horse, supported by Colonel Dennie—who had

just come up with reinforcements from Cabul—with four more companies of native infantry. Despite the overwhelming superiority of numbers, which were at least five to one, Mackenzie and Dennie advanced with the utmost intrepidity to the attack. Never was proved more clearly the superiority of European arms and discipline over the desultory onset of Asia than on this occasion. The Oosbegs, confident in their numbers, and animated with the strongest fanatical zeal, at first stood their ground firmly; but when the guns, which were nobly served, were brought to bear upon them, they broke and fled, and were cut down in great numbers by the cavalry in pursuit. Dost Mahommed and his sons owed their escape to the fleetness of their horses; and soon after, Colonel Dennie had the satisfaction of concluding a treaty with the Wullee of Khooloom, on the summit of the lofty Dundun-i-Shykun, by which all the country to the south of Syghan was yielded to Shah Soojah, that to the north being reserved to the Wullee; and the latter agreed no longer to harbour Dost Mahommed, or give any support to his cause.

14. "I am like a wooden spoon," said Dost Mahommed after this defeat; "you may throw me hither and thither, but I shall not be hurt."* His deeds soon proved the truth of his words. Defeated on the Hindoo Coosh, he reappeared in the Kohistan, and again raised his standard. Macnaghten and the British officers in Cabul were in the middle of their rejoicings for his signal defeat in the Bamian Pass, when intelligence was received of his arrival, and the rapid progress of insurrection in that province. A force under Sir Robert Sale was despatched to the spot, to make head against the insurgents. He came up with them on the 29th September at a fortified post, called Tootundurrah, which was speedily forced, and the Affghans put to flight, though with the loss of Edward Conolly, a lieutenant of cavalry, a noble youth, who had volunteered for the assault. An-

* The wives and children of Dost Mahommed had come into Bamian and surrendered themselves in the beginning of July.

other fortified post, named Joolgah, was next attacked by Sale, of greater strength than the former ; but though the stormers assaulted in the most gallant manner, led by Colonel Tronson of the 13th, the defences were too strong to be overcome, and the column of attack was withdrawn. The place was evacuated next day, and the works destroyed by the British ; but this did by no means compensate the previous repulse, in a country where they were surrounded by an insurgent population so much their superiors in numbers, and everything depended on their keeping up their character for invincibility.

15. But the career of Dost Mahomed, in active warfare at least, was drawing to a close, and that too in a way so strange and unaccountable, that it savours rather of the colours of romance than the sober tints of reality. Sale, with two thousand men, advanced farther into Kohistan, and came up with the Dost on the 18th, at Kardurrah, a fortified place of great strength, occupied by him with five thousand Affghans. The terror was very great in Cabul, from which he was only fifty miles distant, and preparations for a siege were already making in the Bala-Hissar. Macnaghten, therefore, urged upon Sale an immediate attack ; but before the guns could be got up to breach the works, Dost Mahomed abandoned the position, which was taken possession of by the British. His cause, however, seemed to be daily gaining strength ; volunteers flocked to him from all quarters, and some of Shah Soojah's soldiers deserted their British officers and joined the enemy. Encouraged by these favourable circumstances, the Affghan chief again moved forward, and marched straight towards the capital. Having received intelligence of his movements, Sale advanced to intercept him ; and on the 2d November came unexpectedly upon his force in the valley of Purwandurrah, occupying in strength the hills on one side, while the British were posted on the other.

16. Dost Mahomed had no inten-

tion at that time of giving battle, but an accidental circumstance precipitated a collision, attended with the most important consequences. He was withdrawing his troops up the hills, when a body of sepoy horse approached to turn his flank and disquiet his retreat. At the head of a small, but determined, band of Affghan horsemen, Dost Mahomed advanced to meet them. "Follow me," he cried, as he moved forward, "or I am a lost man." The Affghans followed in a manner worthy of such a leader, and the British officers gallantly pressed on to the encounter. Already they had broken through the first troopers of the enemy, when, on looking round, they perceived that, so far from being followed, they had been deserted by their men. Either from disaffection or cowardice, the Hindoo horsemen had turned about and fled, without so much as crossing sabres with the enemy. Nothing remained to the officers but to cut their way back, which they did with heroic courage, though a very heavy loss. Lieutenants Crispin and Broadfoot were slain, after a desperate fight ; a treacherous shot and the dagger of an assassin despatched Dr Lord, and Captains Fraser and Ponsonby only extricated themselves severely wounded from the fight. The swords of the Affghans were soon reeking with the blood of the recreant troopers who had occasioned the disaster, and they stood for some time waving their standards in front of the British line, without any one venturing to attack them. So disconcerted was Sir Alexander Burnes, who was with the detachment, at this disaster, that he wrote to Sir William Macnaghten, that nothing remained but to fall back to Cabul, and that he would do well immediately to concentrate all the available troops there.

17. Macnaghten was making arrangements to carry into effect this disheartening advice, when it was announced to him, as he returned from his evening ride, that an Ameer requested to speak to him. "What Ameer?" asked Sir William. "Dost Mahomed Khan," replied the troop-

er who brought the message; and at the same instant Dost Mahommed appeared. Throwing himself from his horse, he surrendered his sword to the envoy, saying he was come to claim his protection. Sir William courteously returned the sword, and desired the Amocr to remount, which he accordingly did. He had been twenty-four hours in the saddle, and ridden above sixty miles, but he exhibited no symptoms of fatigue. A tent was pitched for him, in which he was indulged with every luxury, and scarcely guarded. He declared that he had no desire to escape, and that, having chosen an asylum, he would keep it. He wrote the same evening to his sons and his family, who were already in the hands of the British, whom he eagerly inquired after. The only anxiety he evinced was when a report got up in the camp that it was the intention of the British Government to banish him to London; but he was soon appeased on being assured that this was not the case. It would appear that, since the storming of Ghuznee and the defeat in the Bamian, he despaired of the ability of Afghanistan to contend in the long-run with Great Britain; and that he purposely chose the day succeeding a brilliant exploit to withdraw from a contest become hopeless, but from which he could now retire with unstained personal honour. He had no reason to complain of his reception, for he was treated in the camp with the very highest distinction, and waited upon by all the principal officers in the army. On the 12th November he set out from Cabul, under a strong escort, for Hindostan. "I hope," said Macnaghten to the Governor-General soon after, "that the Dost will be treated with liberality. The case of Shah Soojah is not parallel. The Shah had no claim upon us. We had no hand in depriving him of his dominion; whereas we ejected the Dost, who never offended us, in support of our policy, of which he was the victim." *

18. The surrender of Dost Mahommed was an event of immense importance to Afghanistan. Though it did

* KAYE, i. 565, 568.

not remove the causes of discontent, nor abate the animosity of the natives at the hated Feringhees, yet it deprived them of a head, and took from their combination its most formidable character,—that of unity of direction. The insurgents, generally defeated and universally dispirited, returned to their homes, leaving the British posts unassailed. Sir William Macnaghten, deeming the insurrection at an end, wrote to the Governor-General that now was the time to secure a safe passage for the troops through the Punjab; and the officers of the army, who had so recently complained of being overworked, now declared that they were dying of ennui. Two events, which occurred at the same time as the surrender of Dost Mahommed, contributed eminently to tranquillise the country. On the 3d November, General Nott reoccupied Khelat, which had been abandoned by its garrison, and on the same day Major Boscawen defeated a considerable body of insurgents, under the son of the ex-chief of that fortress. On the 1st December a still more important action took place near Kotree, where the same chief was attacked by Colonel Marshall, with nine hundred sepoy, sixty horse, and two guns, and, after a gallant action, totally defeated, with the loss of five hundred men slain on the spot, including all the chiefs, and their whole guns and baggage. This signal defeat, and the severity of the weather, closed all efforts on the part of the enemy in that quarter for the remainder of the year.

19. While the snow lay on the ground, which it did for four months, this state of compulsory quiescence continued without interruption. The first symptoms of a renewed insurrection occurred in the end of the year, in the neighbourhood of Candahar. The political direction of that province was in the hands of Major Rawlinson, an officer of equal talent, judgment, and address, intimately acquainted with Eastern customs and feelings; and the military under the direction of General Nott, a noble veteran of the Indian army, de-

* Now Sir Henry Rawlinson, the celebrated Assyrian traveller and antiquarian.

servedly beloved by the soldiery, but blunt in manners, free of speech, and somewhat difficult to act with in a subordinate situation. Unfortunately, a coldness existed between him and Sir John Keane, owing to his having been superseded by the latter in command, in favour of General Willshire, from a narrow-minded prejudice, of long standing in the Queen's army, against the Company's service. It was not long before Nott had an opportunity of giving proof of his talents in the field. Early in January 1841 a body of fifteen hundred insurgent Douranee horse showed itself in the neighbourhood of Candahar. They were attacked by a detachment of sepoys under Captain Farrington, broken, and dispersed. But, notwithstanding this check, the insurrection amongst the Douranee tribes in Zemindawer continued and spread, insomuch that one of our best-informed political agents began to entertain suspicions that Shah Soojah himself, weary of the perilous protection of the British troops, was no stranger to the movement. Certain it is that the spirit of disaffection was even stronger among the Douranee chiefs than the Ghilzyes, and that delegates from them were traversing the whole country, instigating the people to revolt. In addition to this, intelligence was received from Herat to the effect that Yar Mahomed, the faithless vizier of that place, in addition to his innumerable other treacheries, had now, when enriched by British subsidies, openly joined the Persians; insomuch that Colonel Todd had broken up the British mission there, and was on his way back to Afghanistan. Such was the animosity of the old vizier that Shah Kamran, the sovereign, told one of the English officers, in a private audience, that but for his protection "not a Feringhee would have been left alive." As it was, the seizure of all their property was openly discussed in the vizier's council, and it was only by their precipitate retreat that the members of the mission were saved from indignities of the worst kind.

20. It appeared ere long that this open defection of the government of

Herat was part of the general combination for the expulsion of the British and Shah Soojah from Afghanistan, of which the irruption of Dost Mahomed over the Hindoo Coosh was the commencement. Early in May the Ghilzyes in western Afghanistan appeared in great force in the neighbourhood of Khelat-i-Ghilzye, in order to disturb the operations in progress for the rebuilding of the walls of that fortress, so important as commanding the road from Candahar to Cabul. Nott sent Colonel Wymer, an able officer, with 400 infantry, some horse, and four guns, to dislodge them. The enemy's force, before the action began, had increased to 5000 men, and they advanced in three columns, with great steadiness, to the attack. They were received with the utmost gallantry by Wymer's infantry and Hawkins's guns, the steady well-directed fire of which, after a desperate battle of five hours' duration, obliged them to retire with very heavy loss. This was a glorious victory, reflecting the utmost credit on the officers and men engaged in it; but the courage with which the enemy fought foreshadowed a serious and exhausting contest; and it was discovered after the action that the natives had had too good cause for exasperation in the oppressive conduct of some of the British subordinate agents, especially in the collection of the revenue, and the open extortions of Prince Timour's followers.

21. While these operations were going on between Ghuznee and Candahar, the proceedings of the Douranees to the west of the latter town were not less alarming. In the beginning of July, Akhter Khan, an indomitable chief, was in arms before Ghireesk with 3000 men. Captain Woodburn, a dashing officer, who commanded one of the Shah's regiments, was sent against him with 900 infantry, two guns, and a small body of Afghan horse. The enemy made a spirited resistance; but the discharges of Cooper's guns, and the steady fire of Woodburn's infantry, repulsed every attack, though the

treachery of the Affghan horse rendered it impossible to follow up the success in the way that might otherwise have been effected. The moral effect of these victories, however, was very considerable, insomuch that the month of August passed over with greater tokens of peace than any which had occurred since the British troops occupied the country. So flattering were these appearances, so firmly did the British power appear to be established by repeated victories, and so much were the Affghans disheartened by the numerous defeats they had experienced, that had not infatuation subsequently got possession of the military chiefs at Cabul, and cruel acts of oppression alienated the natives, there seems no doubt that the expedition, notwithstanding the obvious dangers with which it was environed, might have been attended with entire success.

• 22. Appearances in the course of the autumn, however, gradually became more serious. Several of the Douranee and Ghilzye chiefs retired from the court of Shah Soojah, the ostensible grounds of complaint being the withdrawal of some pecuniary allowances which they had been accustomed to receive as a consideration for keeping the country under their orders quiet. Having taken their leave, the first thing they did was to begin plundering caravans, a proceeding too much in accordance with the usual habits of Affghanistan to excite much attention. But it was soon evident that it was done systematically, and with the design of raising the country. Akhter Khan was still at the head of the insurrection in western Affghanistan, which spread so rapidly and assumed such proportions, that Rawlinson wrote in the most anxious terms concerning it to Macnaghten, who could only recommend him to seize the rebel chief, and hang him as high as Haman. Early in August, Captain Griffin was sent out against him into Zemindawer with 350 sepoy, 800 horse, and four guns. On the 17th he came up with him, strongly posted near the river Helmund, with

3500 men, in a succession of walled gardens and mud forts, from which a heavy fire was kept up on the assailants. The attack, however, was completely successful. The enclosures were carried by the foot-soldiers with the bayonet, the horse charged with terrific effect, and the Douranees were defeated and dispersed with great slaughter. Shortly before, Colonel Chambers, with a detachment of 1500 men, came up with and dispersed a body of Ghilzyes, who were for the most part cut down or made prisoners.

23. These repeated victories over both the Douranees and Ghilzyes were followed by a lull for the time, and gave hopes of an entire and final pacification of the country. But in reality they had the very opposite effect, and became instrumental, from the false confidence they inspired in the political and military authorities at Cabul, in inducing the terrible calamities which so soon followed. Macnaghten looked around him, and, as he himself said, saw "that everything was quiet from Dan to Beersheba." So persuaded was he that the whole Affghanistan difficulties were over, that he firmly believed he was about to retire in honour and affluence from a life of incessant anxiety and activity. The military command at Cabul was now in the hands of General Elphinstone, Sir Willoughby Cotton having retired in the preceding spring. Elphinstone was a veteran of the Wellington school, who bore a Waterloo medal, where he had commanded a regiment; and a man of high connections, aristocratic influence, and most agreeable manners.* But he was entirely unacquainted with Eastern warfare, advanced in years, a martyr to the gout, which rendered him utterly unfit for personal activity, or even sometimes to sit on horseback, and, as the event proved, though personally brave, possessed of none of the mental energy or foresight which might supply its place. How he should have been selected by Lord Auckland for this arduous situation, in the full know-

* He was a relation of Lord Elphinstone, at that time Governor of Bombay.

ledge of these disqualifications, when such men as Pollock, Nott, and Sale were on the spot, ready and qualified to have discharged its duties, is one of the mysteries of official conduct which will never probably be cleared up, for every one now shuns its responsibility. High aristocratic influence at home, coupled with an illiberal and unfounded jealousy of the Company's service on the part of our military authorities, were probably the secret springs of the movement. The nation would do well to ponder on them, for they all but lost us our Indian empire.

24. It was not long before the fatal effects of this appointment appeared; but in justice to the memory of a gallant but ill-fated officer, it must be added, that grave faults had been committed at Cabul before he took the command. The force now at or near Cabul was very considerable, and had it been judiciously posted and skilfully directed, was perfectly adequate to have maintained that important post against any forces the Affghans could have brought against it. It consisted of the 13th and 44th Queen's foot, the 5th, 35th, 37th, and 54th Bengal native infantry, the 5th Bengal native cavalry, a troop of foot, and another of horse artillery, two regiments of the Shah's infantry, a train of mountain guns, and some Hindostanee and Affghan horse. Of these, however, the Queen's 13th, the 35th, and 37th native infantry, and some of the cavalry and artillery, were under Sir Robert Sale on the way to Jellalabad, or keeping up the communication with the capital by Gundamuck and the Coord Cabul Pass. Thus the force actually at Cabul, or in its immediate vicinity, consisted of one European regiment (the 44th), two sepoy, and two Affghan regiments, and a native regiment of cavalry, with the artillery; in all, 5000 fighting men, who were encumbered with 15,000 camp-followers. But they enjoyed two advantages, which gave them a decided superiority over the enemy. The first of these was the possession of a train of artillery, with ample ammunition, far superior in weight and

efficiency to any which the Affghans could bring against them. The second, the command of the Bala-Hissar, a citadel of great strength, situated on a steep height commanding every part of the city, and utterly impregnable, when garrisoned by British troops and defended by British guns, against the whole collected forces of Affghanistan.

25. With an infatuation so extraordinary, that it almost seems to afford an instance of the old saying, "*Quos Deus vult perdere prior dementat*," all those advantages had been voluntarily thrown away, and the troops placed in positions where, so far from being able to act offensively against the Affghans, they were unable to take any effective steps to defend themselves. Instead of locating the British forces and their magazines in the Bala-Hissar, where there was ample accommodation for them, and they would have been in perfect security, they were placed in cantonments *outside both the citadel and the walls*, in a low situation, commanded in different directions by heights and buildings which swept them on every side. These cantonments, so situated, were of great extent, above a mile in circumference, and surrounded by a rampart so low that a British officer backed a small pony to scramble down the ditch and over the wall. The troops, who had been at first placed in the Bala-Hissar, were withdrawn by Macnaghten's orders *to make way for a hundred and sixty ladies of the harem*. To crown the whole, the entire commissariat stores, with the provisions for the army for the winter, were placed neither in the Bala-Hissar nor the cantonments, *but in a small fort outside both*, and connected with the cantonments by an undefended passage, commanded by an empty fort and a walled garden, inviting the occupation of the enemy. And this under the direction of officers trained in the Peninsular War, and boasting of having been bred in the school of Wellington! *

* The engineer officers must be entirely relieved from this reproach. They strongly urged the placing the troops in the Bala-

26. These infatuated measures had been commenced before, and were in progress when General Elphinstone assumed the command; so that he is responsible only for their having been carried on and persisted in during the summer and autumn, when every day was adding to the proofs of the enormous peril with which they were attended. One-fifth of the sums lavished upon the traitor Yar Mahommed to add to the fortifications of Herat, would have rendered the Bala-Hissar utterly impregnable, and placed the British force in perfect security. "The fine climate," says the eloquent annualist of the war, "braced and exhilarated the British officers. There was no lack of amusement; they rode races, they played at cricket, they went out fishing, they got up dramatic entertainments. When winter came, and the lakes were frozen, they astonished the natives by skating on the ice. But amidst these harmless amusements there were others which filled the natives with the intensest hate. The inmates of the zenana were not unwilling to visit the quarters of the Christian stranger. For two long years had this shame been burning into the hearts of the Cabulese; complaints were made, but they were made in vain. The scandal was open, undisguised, notorious; redress was not to be obtained; it went on till it became intolerable; and the injured began then to see that the only remedy was in their own hands."*

27. But the hand of fate was upon them; and an aggression upon an independent state, alike unjustifiable

Hissar, and the erecting of additional works and barracks on that important fortress, but in vain. Durand, the chief engineer, was particularly urgent on this point. The responsibility of neglecting or overruling his advice rests with Sir William Macnaghten, who sacrificed everything to a show of security.—KAYE, i. 613, note.

* "I told the envoy what was going on, and was not listened to. I told him that complaints were daily made to me of Afghan women being taken to Burnes's moonshee, and of their drinking wine at his house; and of women having been taken to the Chaonee (cantonments), and of my having witnessed it."—SHAH SOOJAH to LORD AUCKLAND, January 17, 1842; MARTIN, 438.

in right and indefensible in expedience, was about to be overtaken by a terrible retribution. In the end of September the subsidies of the native chiefs had been reduced by the British Resident. This excited equal dissatisfaction amongst them all; but the leaders of the Eastern Ghilzyes were the first to move. Quitting Cabul in the beginning of October, they raised their clans, occupied the passes leading to Jellalabad, and entirely cut off our communications with Peshawur. Monteith, with the 35th native infantry, was sent to clear the road; but as he was attacked on the night of the 9th October at Bootak, only one march from Cabul, he was reinforced on the 11th by Sale with the 13th Queen's regiment. The pass of the Coord Cabul was forced, after hard fighting, by these troops on the ensuing day, and Sale returned to Bootak, leaving Monteith alone in the Coord Cabul valley. Here he was speedily assailed by the Ghilzyes, but was soon rejoined by Sale, now at the head of the 13th Queen's and 37th Sepoys. Leaving the 37th behind to keep the road open, the remainder of the force swept onward to Fezeen. Negotiations then were entered into with the insurgent tribes, but with so little effect, that on the march to Gundamuck the brigade was attacked fiercely, and the rearguard thrown into great disorder. At Gundamuck Sale halted. It was now the end of October, and our political officers thought that all resistance was at an end.

28. For some time it had been observed that symptoms of hostility were evinced by the inhabitants of Cabul towards the British troops, and that stones were thrown at the sepoys from the roofs of the houses; but these incidents excited little attention, so resolute were all concerned not to admit that there was any ground for apprehension. On the evening of the 1st November, Burnes congratulated Macnaghten on his approaching departure during a period of profound peace, and at that very moment a conclave of chiefs was held in his close vicinity, to concert the means of an immediate and

most formidable insurrection. It broke out, on the morning of the 2d, simultaneously in several places in the city, and with the utmost violence. Instantly the shops were plundered, the houses of the British officers attacked, and their servants insulted and threatened. Among the first houses assailed were those of Sir Alexander Burnes, and Captain Johnson, the paymaster of the Shah's forces. Burnes had been warned of his danger, and recommended to retire to the Bala-Hissar; but he bravely resolved to remain at his post. With a mistaken lenity, he forbade his sepoy guard to fire on the insurgents, and preferred haranguing them from a gallery in the upper part of his house. He might as well have addressed so many wild beasts. Nothing was heard in the crowd but angry voices clamouring for the heads of the English officers, wild dissonant cries, and threats of vengeance. Presently shots issued from the infuriated multitude thirsting for blood and plunder, and a general assault upon the houses was made. Broadfoot, who sold his life dearly, was the first to fall; a ball pierced his heart. Meanwhile a party of the insurgents had got possession of Burnes's stables, and found their way into his garden, where they were calling upon him to come down. He did so in disguise, seeking to escape; he was recognised, set upon, and murdered, with his brother, Lieut. Burnes, of the Bombay army. The sepoys who composed the guard fought nobly when permitted to do so, but they were overpowered by numbers, and cut off to a man. From this scene of murder the mob proceeded to the treasury of the Shah's paymaster, which they forced open by setting fire to the gateway. The guard of sepoys, twenty-eight in number, were massacred, every human being in the house was murdered, treasure to the amount of £17,000 carried off, and the building set on fire and burnt to the ground. Emboldened by the impunity with which these crimes were committed, the mob now gave full rein to their passions, burning houses, plundering shops, and mas-

sacring men, women, and children in every part of the city indiscriminately; and all this when five thousand British troops were in cantonments within half an hour's march, not one of whom was ordered out to arrest the disorders! The Affghans themselves admitted that a hundred men, resolutely commanded, would have sufficed at the outset to crush the insurrection.*

29. During this eventful day, big, as the event proved, with the whole fate of the Affghanistan expedition, a body of troops, under General Shelton, was moved, with four guns, into the Bala-Hissar, *but the remainder of the troops were kept in cantonments.* No step was taken to send assistance to Sir Alexander Burnes or Captain Johnson; and the only effort attempted to check this revolt was by the Shah, who despatched a Hindostanee regiment of his own troops, with two guns, against the insurgents, who were too weak to effect anything at the late period when they were brought into action, and with difficulty effected their retreat with their guns. Brigadier Shelton in vain urged that not a moment should be lost in acting vigorously against the enemy. Orders were sent to Major Griffiths, who, with the 37th regiment of sepoys, lay at Coord Cabul, to advance to the capital, which he immediately did, and arrived next day, having bravely fought his way through several thousand insurgents. Meanwhile orders and counter-orders were given, but nothing was done. No

* "Not only I, but several other officers, have spoken to Affghans on the subject; there has never been a dissenting voice that, had a small party gone into the town prior to the plunder of my treasury and the murder of Burnes, the insurrection would have been instantly quashed. This was also the opinion of Captain Trevor, at that time living in the town. Captain Mackenzie has given an equally emphatic opinion to the same effect. The mob at first did not exceed a hundred men—thirty only, in the first instance, were sent to surround Burnes's house. One and all of the Affghans declared that the slightest exhibition of energy on our part in the first instance, more especially in reinforcing my post and that of Trevor, would at once have decided the Kuzilbashes, and all over whom they possessed any influence, in our favour."—*Johnson's MS. Journal; Eyre's Journal; KAYE, ii. 17, 18.*

attempt was made to avenge Burnes's murder, or the outraged majesty of the British name. The consequence was that the insurgents, emboldened by impunity, increased rapidly in numbers, spread themselves out in every direction, occupied post after post as they were successively abandoned by the British, and before nightfall on the second day the whole capital was in their possession. The only attempt made to impede them was with three companies and two guns, who, during the afternoon of the 3d, made a feeble demonstration against one of the city gates, but were of course unable to effect anything.

30. The extreme danger of the British position was now apparent to all, and Macnaghten, seriously alarmed, wrote urgent letters both to Captain M'Gregor to send up Sale's force from Gundamuck, and to Candahar to stop the return of the troops on their march to India through that city, and send them back to his relief. But neither of these succours could be expected for some time, and meanwhile the danger was pressing, and such as could only be met by instant and decisive measures. The artillery, always weak, and inadequate to the wants of the troops, was divided between the cantonments and the Bala-Hissar, so that neither had an adequate amount of that necessary arm. The Commissariat Fort, as already mentioned, was situated outside both the Bala-Hissar and the cantonments, and though it contained the whole provisions and stores of the army, it had no guns, and was garrisoned only by eighty sepoy, under Ensign Warren. Between this fort and the cantonments was another fort, called the Shicreef's Fort, which commanded the passage between the two. General Elphinstone had on the preceding day proposed to occupy this fort with his own troops, but Macnaghten opposed it, declaring it would be impolitic to do so. The consequence was, it was occupied by the enemy, whose marksmen swarmed around it in every direction, and kept up from behind the stone enclosure which surrounded it a deadly fire upon any

reinforcements sent out to support Warren's little party in the Commissariat Fort.* In vain that officer sent message after message to Elphinstone to announce that he was hard pressed, and if not relieved would either perish or be obliged to evacuate his post. With characteristic indecision, the old General listened to everything but did nothing; orders were repeatedly given and countermanded for the march of a detachment to reinforce Warren; and at length Captain Boyd, of the commissariat, obtained an order for the troops destined to that service to march at two in the morning. But it was again delayed till daybreak, when it was too late. The little garrison, seeing no prospect of relief, had escaped by working a hole from the interior of the fort, with tools sent the preceding night, intended to facilitate the withdrawal of the stores. All the magazines, including the whole supplies for the army, with the exception of another in a still more exposed situation, to be immediately noticed, fell into the enemy's hands, among whom this easy and unlooked-for advantage excited unbounded confidence and enthusiasm.

31. This disaster was immediately followed by another hardly less serious. In May 1841, 17,000 maunds of ottah or ground wheat, in general use in the country, had been stored by Captain Johnson in the Bala-Hissar for the use of the Shah's troops; but Macnaghten, in spite of that officer's remonstrances, insisted on its being removed, and placed in some camel-sheds on the outskirts of the city, where, though a few slight works were thrown up, it was almost entirely undefended. Early on the morning of the 2d November, this important post was attacked by a large body of insurgents. Captain Mackenzie was in charge of it, with a small garrison, encumbered with women and children. He made a noble defence, and held the fort till his men had expended every cartridge in defending it. In

* Two feeble demonstrations made with this object on the morning of the 3d completely failed.

vain reinforcements or succour of some sort were urgently applied for; in vain "every eye was turned towards the cantonment, looking for the glittering bayonets through the trees." Not a man came to their relief, although even a trifling demonstration from headquarters would have turned the scale in their favour, and brought the whole Kuzilbashes to their side. At length, after having defended the fort for two entire days, and fired away his last cartridge, Mackenzie, finding that no succour was to be sent to him, yielded to the entreaties of his men, who prayed to be led against the enemy, and with heroic valour cut his way through them back to the cantonments. The fort itself, with the whole grain it contained, fell into the enemy's hands.

32. The loss of these two forts, with the entire magazines and commissariat stores of the army, was decisive of the fate of the campaign, not only from the starvation which it brought home to the door of the British forces, but from the depression which it produced among our men, and the corresponding exultation which it induced in the enemy. Every man on both sides now saw that the maintenance of the capital through the winter by the invaders was impossible, for they had lost their whole supplies and magazines, and it was out of the question to think of forming others, with the ground covered with snow, and every village in the hands of hostile multitudes, with weapons which they knew well how to use in their hands. Reinforcements from India were only likely to augment the danger, even supposing they could make their way through the terrible defiles and insurgent population of Afghanistan, for they would only augment the number of useless mouths in the garrison. The knowledge of these circumstances excited the utmost indignation and despondency in the British forces, and in a similar degree excited and encouraged the Afghans. The charm of British invincibility was broken. The intelligence of the capture of the Commissariat Fort

spread like wildfire, and brought thousands upon thousands into the scene of conquest, to share in the plunder of the Christian dogs. The forts soon resembled so many ant-hills, where multitudes were swarming, every one carrying off some part of the spoil; and all this within four hundred yards of a fortified cantonment, where five thousand British troops, in indignant silence and constrained inactivity, were witnesses of the disgraceful scene!

33. At length the loud clamour of brave men, restrained by incapacity and irresolution in their chiefs from doing what their own courage prompted, became so violent that it was resolved to attempt something. On the 6th a storming party, consisting of one company of the 44th and two sepoy regiments, was told off to assault Mahommed Shereef's Fort, the possession of which by the enemy had told so severely upon the besieged in the preceding days, and it was carried with a vigour worthy of British troops. Ensign Raban, who commanded the forlorn hope, was killed as he planted the colours on the breach. A variety of desultory actions ensued, in which the British were so successful, that it was evident, if they had been directed with ordinary capacity and resolution, a general battle might have been brought on, and the enemy totally defeated. At the same time, the activity and intelligence of the commissariat officers, Captains Boyd and Johnson, procured supplies from the neighbouring villages; and the troops having been put on half rations, the difficulty of subsistence, which at the moment was the most pressing, was surmounted. But General Elphinstone apprehended an equally serious want, which was that of ammunition; and such was his alarm, that on the same day he wrote to Sir William Macnaghten, recommending a capitulation.* In point of fact, the event

* "We have temporarily, and I hope permanently, got over the difficulty of provisioning. Our next consideration is ammunition—and it is a very serious and awful one. We have expended a great quantity, and therefore it becomes worthy of thought on your

proved that there was ammunition in abundance for two months' consumption. Plans were submitted to the General for recapturing the Commissariat Fort, but he could not be prevailed on to adopt any of them. He was evidently desperate, and thought only of arranging a capitulation. Attempts were made to buy off the rebel chiefs; but though 500,000 rupees (£50,000) was offered, nothing effective was done; and it had become evident that matters had come to that pass, that it was by iron, not gold, that deliverance could alone be looked for.

34. The extremely debilitated state of General Elphinstone's health rendered it absolutely necessary that he should have a coadjutor of younger years and greater vigour, and Brigadier Shelton was sent from the Bala-Hissar, with a gun and a regiment of the Shah's troops, for that purpose, into the cantonments. His arrival was hailed with joy by the troops, who regarded him as a deliverer. He did not possess popular manners, and it was soon painfully apparent that no cordial co-operation between him and General Elphinstone was to be expected; but he was known to have manly qualities and undoubted personal courage. The great extent of the fortifications, the slender supplies of provisions, the desponding faces of officers and men around him, at once revealed the critical nature of their situation. They had only provisions for three days' consumption in store, and the works required so large a force to guard them that few could be spared for external operations. Shelton endeavoured to correct what he conceived defective, and to put the cantonments in a better posture of defence; but he

part how desirable it is that our operations should not be protracted by anything in *treating* that might tend to a continuance of the present state of things. Do not suppose from this that I wish to recommend or am advocating humiliating terms, or such as would reflect disgrace on us, but the fact of ammunition must not be lost sight of. Our case is not yet desperate. I do not mean to impress that, but it must be borne in mind that it goes very fast."—GENERAL ELPHINSTONE to SIR W. MACNAGHTEN, November 6, 1841; KAYE, ii. 39.

was thwarted by the jealousy of Elphinstone, who reminded him that he was the commander-in-chief, and complained that he did not receive from his brigadier that cordial co-operation which he was entitled to have expected. Thus orders were given and countermanded; plans were discussed, and their decision adjourned; and it soon became too evident that Shelton's arrival, by producing *disunion* in the military councils, would render the position of the troops, if possible, worse than it had been before.

35. Macnaghten, with whom every bold counsel from this time forward originated, had strongly urged an attack on the Rieka-bashee Fort, situated at the north-eastern angle of the cantonments, and from which the walls were commanded, and he had even taken upon himself the whole responsibility of the undertaking. Elphinstone at last consented, and two thousand men were, on the morning of the 10th November, put under Shelton's command for the assault. But before the orders to move forward were given, Elphinstone's old irresolution returned, and the expedition was delayed. It was, however, undertaken in the afternoon; but by that time the fort had been much strengthened, and the Affghans were as much elated as the British were dispirited by the delay. Two European companies of the 44th, and four native companies, were told off for the assault, under the command of Colonel Mackrell, who led the storm in the most gallant manner. Colonel Mackrell and Lieutenant Bird, of the Shah's 6th infantry, on a small gate being blown in, forced their way into the fort, and already the shout of victory was heard within its walls, when the column, advancing in double-quick time in support, being charged in flank by a body of Affghan horse, took to flight, drawing a large part of the stormers, both European and native, after them. They were rallied by Shelton, who evinced in that trying moment the courage of a hero, and again brought up to the assault. A second time they were charged in flank,

and fled; again they were rallied and brought back to the attack by Shelton. Meantime the brave men, a mere handful in number, who had forced their way with Mackrell and Bird into the fort, being unsupported, were beset by a crowd of Affghans who had fled on the first storm, but now, seeing the repulse of the column in support, returned with loud shouts to the attack. Mackrell ~~fell~~ mortally wounded, after defending himself with undaunted courage. Bird, with two sepoy, sought refuge in a stable, the door of which they barricaded, and before they were relieved had slain thirty of the enemy with their own hands. At length the fort was carried by Shelton at the head of the support, and the gallant three liberated from their perilous prison.*

36. On the fall of the Ricka-bashee Fort, several smaller ones in the vicinity were abandoned by the enemy, in one of which a considerable supply of grain was found. Shelton followed the enemy, who showed themselves in some force on the hills; but the horse-artillery opened on them with such effect that they retired into the city. Although the capture of the fort was checkered by disaster, and far from being creditable to the arrangements of the generals-in-chief, who, with a large force of cavalry in the cantonments, had allowed the storming columns to be charged in flank by the Affghan horse, yet its ultimate success was eminently favourable to the British arms. The envoy declared it had averted the necessity of an inglorious retreat. There can be no doubt that, had it been vigorously followed up, it promised the most auspicious results. For several days after it the Affghans desisted from their attacks; they were obviously checked in their career. The commissaries, whose activity was above all praise, turned the breathing-

* Such was the panic occasioned by the Affghan charge, even among the European troops, that when Major Scott of the 44th "called on volunteers to follow him, only one man answered the appeal. His name was Stuart, and he was most deservedly made a sergeant on the request of Sir W. Macnaghten."—THORNTON, vi. 265.

timo to good account in the purchase and securing of provisions. The villagers, relieved from their apprehensions, began to bring supplies freely into the camp; and the envoy, seeing the military commander hopeless of extrication from the surrounding difficulties by honourable means, renewed his efforts to sow dissension among the chiefs by profuse offers of money.

37. But this lull was of short duration. The Affghans, seeing that the success of the 10th was not followed up, again showed themselves a few days after in great force on the heights overlooking the camp, and began to cannonade the cantonments. With the utmost difficulty Macnaghten persuaded the General to send out, on the 13th, a force to dislodge them, and this was done only by his taking upon himself the whole responsibility of the measure. A strong detachment of foot and horse, embracing six companies of the 44th with two guns, went out under Brigadier Shelton, and it advanced to the attack with great vigour and intrepidity. But again the Affghan horse charged them in flank; the assailed British fired wildly and without aim, chiefly in the air, and the enemy's cavalry went clean through them from side to side. But the check was only momentary. The British troops re-formed at the foot of the hill; Eyre's guns were brought to bear upon the Affghans, and by a gallant charge of Anderson's horse up the slope, the enemy were beaten back and two guns taken. Macnaghten despatched the most urgent orders to complete the triumph of the day by bringing both guns into the cantonments, but one only could be got off. The other was exposed to so heavy a fire from the Affghan marksmen, that it was found impossible to bring it away.

38. This success again rendered the enemy quiet for some days; and Macnaghten took advantage of it to send repeated and most urgent letters, both to M'Gregor, the political agent with Sale's force, then on the way to Jellalabad, and to Rawlinson at Candahar, to send their whole disposable forces up to the relief of the troops now be-

sieged in the capital.* These able officers were placed in a situation of great difficulty by these requisitions. On the one hand, the envoy at Cabul was their superior officer, whose orders they were bound to obey; and the very existence of the troops in the capital might depend on succours being instantly sent forward to their relief. On the other hand, the state of affairs at Cabul seemed so desperate, from the destruction of the commissariat stores and the scanty supplies of the garrison, that it appeared to be running into certain destruction to send up any additional mouths to share them. After much and anxious deliberation, M'Gregor and Sale resolved to disobey the order, and to move their troops from Gandamuck, not to Cabul, but Jellalabad; and although Rawlinson and Nott despatched a sepoy brigade, under Colonel M'Laren, from Candahar, yet it returned to that capital, after having proceeded a few marches towards Cabul, upon finding the draught-cattle perishing by the way. It is impossible to say with any degree of certainty whether or not Nott and Sale did right in taking upon themselves the responsibility of disobeying their orders, for disaster stared them in the face whatever they did. On the one hand, going forward to Cabul seemed only swelling the array of Affghan captives or victims, and depriving the British Government of the chief forces on which they could rely to preserve any part of their dominion in Affghanistan; on the other, to disobey the order was to leave the troops in the capital to their fate, virtually abandon Shah Soojah to the vengeance of his rebellious subjects, and relinquish the whole objects for which the expedition had been under-

* "Our situation is a very precarious one, but with your assistance we should do well; and you must render it to us, if you have any regard for our lives, or for the honour of our country. We may be said to be in a state of siege, and had we not made two desperate sallies, we should ere now have been annihilated. We have provisions for only ten days, but when you arrive we shall be able to command the resources of the country."—MACNAGHTEN to M'GREGOR, November 14, 1841; KAYE, ii. 68.

taken. In so difficult a matter, and when only a choice of evils remained to the British officers, history cannot pass sentence one way or the other upon those exposed to the crisis. But in justice to Macnaghten and Elphinstone, it must be added that the non-arrival of the troops on which they relied from Jellalabad and Candahar, aggravated the dangers of their position at Cabul in a most material degree; for possibly, if they had come up, the blockade of the cantonments might have been raised, provisions obtained, as before the siege commenced, from the surrounding country, the enemy defeated in the field, and the whole calamities of the campaign avoided.*

39. While disaster was thus closing its iron net round the British forces in the capital, calamities of a still more serious kind had befallen them in other quarters. On the 15th November, Major Pottinger and Lieutenant Haughton came in wounded from Charekar, in Kohistan, and reported that the gallant Ghoorka regiment stationed there had been annihilated. This noble corps, second to none in the East in valour and fidelity, had been placed in some fortified barracks at Charekar, the defences of which were only in course of construction, when the insurrection broke out, and they were immediately surrounded by several thousand armed men, whose hostile intentions, notwithstanding loud professions of fidelity and friendship, were soon too apparent. With characteristic treachery, the chiefs invited Pottinger,

* "I have written to you daily, pointing out our precarious state, and urging you to return here, with Sale's brigade, with all possible expedition. General Elphinstone has done the same; and we now learn, to our utter dismay, that you have proceeded to Jellalabad. Our situation is a desperate one, if you do not immediately return to our relief; and I beg that you will do so without a moment's delay. We have been now besieged for fourteen days, and without your assistance are utterly unable to carry on any offensive operations. You can easily make Cabul in eight marches, and the Ghizyes are here, you would not have many enemies to contend with."—SIR W. MACNAGHTEN to CAPTAIN M'GREGOR, Cabul, 17th November 1841; KAYE, ii. 73.

the political agent, and Rattray, who commanded a party in the neighbourhood, to a conference, at which the latter was basely assassinated, and from which the former with difficulty escaped with his life. The Affghans now threw off the mask, and closely invested the fortified barracks. So numerous were the enemy's forces, that Havildar Mootre Ram, of the Ghoorka regiment, who escaped from the attack, said, "there were whole acres of gleaming swords moving towards us." Pottinger, throwing off, on the approach of danger, his political character, took charge, as at the siege of Herat, of the guns; and the Ghoorkas, supported by the fire of his artillery, made a heroic defence against repeated assaults by an enemy five times their number. Night found them still in possession of their position; but next day the garrison of a castle in the neighbourhood, which commanded the barracks, was betrayed into surrendering, and the balls from it began to shower down on the position. Soon it was discovered that they had a worse enemy to contend with than even the matchlocks of the Affghans, for there was no water for the garrison. Every effort made to obtain a supply of this necessary element failed; and at length the sufferings of the men became so intolerable that they sallied out and found death from the Affghan marksmen, in the frantic desire to obtain a few drops of the precious fluid from a spring which gushed from a neighbouring rock. The lips of the men became swollen and bloody; their tongues clove to the roofs of their mouths. Seeing destruction inevitable if they remained where they were, and disdaining, even in such desperate circumstances, to surrender, Pottinger and Haughton resolved on a desperate attempt to cut their way through the enemy. They put themselves, accordingly, at the head of two hundred men, all who remained of the regiment, and by almost superhuman efforts succeeded in forcing their way out. But numbers fell in the desperate attempt; still more perished of thirst on the way, or sank under the balls or knives

of the Affghans who crowded round the retreating column. Pottinger and Haughton alone, with a single sepoy, half dead with wounds and fatigue, but unsubdued, reached the cantonments at Cabul to tell the dismal tale. The whole remainder of the regiment, after struggling to the last with devoted valour under its worthy leaders, Ensign Rose and Dr Grant, perished.

40. The only course which, amidst such accumulating difficulties, presented a chance even of escape to the British at Cabul, after it was ascertained that no reinforcements were to be looked for either from Jellalabad or Candahar, was to move the whole forces, and all the provisions that could be got together, at once into the Bala-Hissar, where they would, in the mean time, have been free from molestation, and they might have securely sallied out in large bodies, and obtained supplies from the adjoining country. Shah Soojah favoured this project, and the engineers had earnestly counselled it from the very commencement of the insurrection. Shelton, however, opposed it in the most vehement manner, as dangerous, discreditable, and likely to be attended with a great loss. Elphinstone had scarcely any opinion on the subject; Macnaghten unfortunately yielded to Shelton's arguments, and the removal of the force to the Bala-Hissar was given up. Yet it presented a very faint and the sole chance of escape from disaster; for what had rendered the sallies from the cantonments hitherto so unfortunate was, that they were of such extent that, from the number required for their defence, few only could be spared for external operations; whereas, as the troops would have been safe in the citadel, a much greater and more imposing force might have been spared for external foraging attacks. And if all the useless mouths had been removed from the Bala-Hissar, there were provisions in it enough to have served the whole fighting men in it and the cantonments till spring.

41. It being determined not to retire to the Bala-Hissar, nothing remained but to open negotiations for a

capitulation with the enemy. The military authorities incessantly represented to the envoy "the distressed state of the troops and cattle from want of provisions, and the hopelessness of further resistance." These representations, coupled with the non-arrival of the expected reinforcements from Jellalabad and Candahar, and the addition of the Affghans, who had destroyed the Ghoorka regiment in Kohistan, to the besieging force, rendered it but too plain that this must be the ultimate issue of the struggle. Correspondence, accordingly, passed between the envoy and General Elphinstone on the subject; but before it could be brought to a point, an action, one of the most disastrous ever sustained by the British army, was fought. Notwithstanding the blockade, the commissaries, owing to the indefatigable activity of Captain Johnson, had hitherto daily drawn supplies of grain from the village of Beh-Meru; and the enemy, seeing this, planted troops upon the adjacent hills to prevent its continuance. Upon this, Macnaghten urged an immediate attack, to dispossess them of this commanding position; and although Shelton strongly represented the hazard of such a step in the fatigued and disheartened state of the men, it was finally determined that it should take place. A feeble attempt to dislodge the enemy having failed on the 22d, preparations on a large scale were made for renewing the attack at daybreak on the following morning.

42. The attack took place, accordingly, at the hour fixed on, and at first with unlooked-for success. The force consisted of seventeen companies, of whom five were Europeans of the 44th; three squadrons of native horse, a hundred sappers, and one gun. Why one only was taken when there were plenty in the cantonments, and an order of Lord Hastings forbade less than *two guns* ever to be taken out on any occasion, is one of the mysteries of that unhappy day which will probably never be cleared up. Sallying out in the grey of the morning, Shel-

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ton occupied the hill without resistance. The single gun now did good service; sending a shower of grape at daylight into the village, it caused a panic among the enemy in it, which led the greater part of them to abandon it. Advantage, however, was not taken of the surprise to storm the village, part of which remained in the enemy's hands; and soon crowds of Affghans, on the alarm being spread, came pouring out of the city to give the Feringhees battle. Shelton, seeing his force, which did not exceed fourteen hundred men, greatly outnumbered, drew them up in two squares on the brow of the hill, with the gun in front and the cavalry in rear. The gun was splendidly worked, and for a time did terrible execution in the crowded masses of the Affghans on the hill opposite; but from being so often fired, it became so heated in the vent that it could not at length be used. Nothing remained then but the muskets of the men to reply to the matchlocks of the Affghans; and it was soon found that they would not carry so far as the long guns of the enemy. Securely posted at a distance, where the infantry's balls could not reach them, the Affghans, second to none in the world as marksmen, sent in a destructive fire into our squares, on which, as on the Russian masses afterwards at Inkermann, every shot took effect. Their spirits sank, and Shelton, whose courage never failed him in danger, in vain called on his men to use their bayonets. Not a musket was brought down to the charge, even in the English companies; and so completely were the troops depressed, that when the Affghans, who had come swarming up the side of the hill, in bravado, planted a standard within thirty yards of the British ranks, not a man would advance to take it. In vain the officers nobly stood in front, and in default of ammunition hurled stones at the enemy; the sepoys would not move. Seeing their advantage, the Affghans made a sudden rush on the column, and surrounded the gun. The gunners fought with desperate resolution, and were cut

down at their post. Lieutenant Laing fell dead as he was waving his sword over the gun; Captain M'Intosh shared the same fate. The gun was abandoned, and the infantry retired; but being rallied by Shelton, they charged with the bayonet, drove the enemy back in confusion, and retook it. At the same time Abdoollah Khan, their leader, fell.

43. The crisis of the day had now arrived, and if Elphinstone had sent a body of troops out of the cantonments to pursue the flying enemy, all might have been restored, and a glorious victory gained. The envoy warmly urged such a step upon General Elphinstone, but he said it was a wild scheme, and negatived the proposal. Fresh horses, however, and a new limber, were sent out for the gun, which was soon in full activity, and playing with great effect upon the enemy. But further multitudes issued from the city, and again it was found that the British musket was no match at a long range for the Affghan jezails. The troops fell fast under the deadly storm, and yet they were so demoralised that nothing could induce them to advance and close with the enemy. At this moment, when the officers were nearly all killed or wounded, and Shelton had five balls in his clothes, a party of Affghans who had crawled up a gorge unseen started up and charged home on the British flank. In an instant a panic seized the whole force; horse and foot rushed precipitately down the hill, closely followed by the Affghan cavalry, which thundered in close pursuit. The gunners alone nobly sustained the honour of the British name. Intent only on the preservation of their gun, they dashed down the hill into the midst of the enemy's cavalry, and had nearly got through; but they were all killed or wounded, and the gun fell a second time into the enemy's hands. All order was now lost: Europeans and Asiatics, infantry and cavalry, rushed in one confused mass into the cantonments; and it was only in consequence of the neglect of the Affghans, who retired, uttering shouts of triumph, into the city, to follow up

this advantage, that the whole cantonments did not fall into their hands.

44. This disastrous defeat rendered it utterly hopeless to think of continuing the contest, and nothing remained but to arrange the best terms of capitulation that could be obtained. The sick and wounded in the cantonments amounted already to seven hundred; and such was the state of apathy and despair to which the troops were reduced, that all thought of external operations was of necessity abandoned. Removal to the Bala-Hissar, however practicable at an earlier period, was not deemed possible in the demoralised state of the army, though the King and Captain Conolly earnestly counselled it as the only means of safety even at the eleventh hour. The enemy had made pacific overtures, and Macnaghten, after obtaining from Elphinstone a written opinion that the position was no longer tenable, agreed to go into the proposal. The Affghans, however, insisted on a surrender at discretion. To this the envoy positively refused to submit. "We shall meet then," said Sultan Maffommed Khan, who commanded the Affghans, "on the field of battle." "At all events," replied Macnaghten, "we shall meet at the day of judgment." And so the conference broke off: but during its brief continuance amicable relations had already sprung up between the opposite parties. The Affghans, fully armed, came round the cantonments and gave vegetables to the soldiers of the 54th, who went out unarmed among them, and shook hands with those with whom they had so recently been engaged in mortal strife.*

45. The immediate resumption of active hostilities, however, was prevented, and the negotiations prolonged, by the arrival next day in the Affghan camp of Akbar Khan, a son of Dost Mahommed, who was less inclined than Sultan Mahommed to push matters to extremities. His arrival as the representative of his father, the sovereign of their choice, was hailed with joy by the Affghan chiefs, and

* KAYE, ii. 96.

the British deemed his presence a guarantee for the granting of more favourable terms, as his father and brother were prisoners in the hands of the British. His conduct was from the first distinguished by prudence and sagacity. Wisely resolving not to endanger the military advantages already gained by pushing a desperate foe to extremities, he turned his whole attention to cutting off the supplies, and with such success that both the men and animals in the cantonments were soon reduced to the last extremities.* But meanwhile Abdoollah Khan and Meer Musjedee, two of the chiefs most hostile to the British, died of their wounds, or were assassinated, and the negotiation was resumed under such promising auspices that Macnaghten wrote that their prospects were brightening, "and if we had only provisions, which with due exertions ought to be obtained, we should be able to defy the whole of Affghanistan for any period." On the other hand, General Elphinstone wrote to the envoy: "Retreat without terms is almost impossible; few would reach Jellalabad. The only alternative is to renew the negotiation. With provisions we might hold out, but without them I do not see what can be done, or how we are to avert starvation." It was soon evident that the General's opinion was, as matters now stood, the better founded. On the 5th December the Affghans burnt, in open day, a bridge, the sole means of retreat, which General Elphinstone had thrown across the Cabul river; Mahommed Shercef's Fort, the scene of such alternate victory and defeat, was abandoned next day, the moment the enemy showed themselves before it; and the day after, the guard for the protection of the cantonment ba-

zaar, which had hitherto been intrusted to the 44th regiment, was withdrawn from them, and given to a sepoy regiment. So demoralised had even the European soldiers become, from their long-continued sufferings, that Lieut. Sturt, on being asked if the retaking of the Shereef's Fort was practicable and tenable, replied, "Practicable if the men will fight; tenable if they don't run away!" On the 8th December, provisions, even on the most reduced scale, only remained for four days, and a capitulation had become a matter of absolute necessity.

46. Two days after, intelligence was received of the brilliant success of Sir R. Sale at Jellalabad, which will be noticed in a succeeding chapter, but General Elphinstone held out no hopes to the envoy that it made any alteration in the posture of their affairs. The negotiation, accordingly, was resumed, and after a great many changes, a capitulation was finally agreed to on the 11th, to the very last degree dishonourable to the British arms. By it, it was agreed that the English were to evacuate Affghanistan with all possible expedition. The troops in Cabul and Jellalabad were to retire by the way of Peshawur, and be treated with all honour, and receive every possible assistance in carriage and provisions on their march. On their reaching that city, Dost Mahommed and his family were to be restored to Cabul, and Shah Soojah and his family return to India. The Affghans were to remain on terms of amity with the English, and contract no alliance with any foreign power without their consent. The troops at Ghuznee and Candahar were to retire by Cabul or the Bolan Pass, and be provided with carriages and provisions like those from Cabul. The necessity of concluding this convention was thus set forth by the envoy, in a report left unfinished at his death: "The whole country had risen in rebellion; our communications on all sides were cut off; almost every public officer, whether paid by ourselves or his majesty, had declared for the new gover-

* "In the mean time our cattle have been starving for some time past, not a blade of grass, nor a particle of *bhoosah* nor grain procurable. The barley in store is served out as provisions to the camp-followers, who get half a pound for their daily food. Our cattle are subsisted on the twigs, branches, and bark of trees. Scarcely an animal fit to carry a load."—CAPTAIN JOHNSON'S *Journal*, MS. Records, 1st December, 1841; KAYE, ii. 101.

nor ; and by far the greater part even of his majesty's domestic servants had deserted him. We had been fighting forty days against very superior numbers, under most disadvantageous circumstances, with a deplorable loss of valuable lives ; and in a day or two we must have perished from hunger, to say nothing of the advanced season of the year and the extreme cold, from the effects of which the native troops were suffering severely. I had been repeatedly apprised by the military authorities that nothing could be done with our troops, and I regret to add that desertions to the enemy were becoming of frequent occurrence among them." *

47. But however stern may have been the necessity under which this humiliating convention was concluded, and however favourable in appearance some of the terms agreed to, the British ere long received convincing proof that they would not be observed by the savage and treacherous enemy with whom they had to deal. On the 13th December, in pursuance of the treaty, the British troops, six hundred in number, evacuated the Bala-Hissar, leaving Shah Soojah and his native troops in it ; and the moment they were out, the gates were closed, and the guns opened on the retiring columns without any distinction of friend or foe. The troops were obliged to halt on the ground before they reached the cantonments, and pass the night ^{on} the snow during intense cold, without food, fire, or covering of any sort. They could do nothing but stand "or walk about, looking for the rising of the morning star." The Affghan chiefs, instead of serving the men with provisions and carriages, as stipulated in the treaty, refused to give them any until the forts still held were surrendered. This was conceded, and on the 16th the Affghans were in possession of all the British forts beyond the cantonments, and their colours waved on the ramparts. Still provisions came in very slowly, so that the men were

terally "living from hand to mouth," and no carriages at all were sent. Much of the very grain brought out by our own men from the Bala-Hissar, amounting to sixteen hundred maunds of wheat, was abandoned to a worthless rabble, who pillaged and carried it off under the very eyes of the starving soldiers. Even after that, supplies were brought in very slowly and irregularly by the Affghans ; and as carriages were wholly wanting, it was impossible to set out on the march. On the 18th, snow began to fall in great quantities, and before evening was several inches deep ; while the Affghans, growing hourly more insolent by the sight of their enemies' distresses, now rose in their demands, and insisted on the entire surrender of their arms and guns by the famishing and half-frozen multitude.

48. On the 19th, intelligence was received of the return of M'Laren's brigade to Candahar, which closed the door against all hope of succour from that quarter, to which the envoy had clung with desperate tenacity, and orders were sent to the generals in command in that station and at Jelalabad to evacuate them without delay, in terms of the convention. Driven by so many untoward circumstances, Macnaghten now turned a willing ear to certain proposals made to him by some chiefs of the rival factions, by which he ~~was~~ to sow dissension among them, and possibly enable him to shake himself loose of a treaty from which the Affghans had already openly receded. The proposal came from Akbar Khan, and was to the effect that Ameen Oollah Khan, one of the most powerful of the hostile chiefs, should be seized and imprisoned, and Mahommed Khan's fort reoccupied by the British troops, who were to remain at Cabul some months longer, and then evacuate the country in a friendly manner ; that Shah Soojah was to retain the sovereignty, but Akbar Khan to be declared his vizier, and receive a very large gratuity in money. It was added, that for a reasonable sum the head of the hostile chief should be sent to the English envoy. Macnaghten

* Macnaghten's unfinished report, quoted by KAYE, I. 126.

replied to the last proposal in terms worthy of a British diplomatist, "that it was neither his custom nor that of his country to give a price for blood;" but in the desperate condition of the British army, the previous ones appeared well worthy of consideration, and a meeting to discuss them more fully, and carry them into effect, was arranged with Akbar Khan to take place on the following day.

49. Macnaghten was not ignorant of the danger of attending any conference with such faithless and treacherous parties as the Affghan chiefs; but circumstances were so desperate that he clung to any ray of hope, however feeble; and as he said himself, "death would be preferable to the life of anxiety he had been leading for six weeks past." He went, accordingly, at noon on the 23d, to the place appointed, accompanied by Lawrence, Trevor, and Mackenzie, his confidential staff-officers; and although warned by the latter that it was a plot, he persevered with devoted courage, deeming it the only possible way of averting destruction from the army, dishonour from the country. He merely left orders with Elphinstone to have two regiments and two guns got ready as quickly as possible to secure Mahommed Khan's fort, and left the General with some expressions of impatience at the remonstrances made against his imprudence. So impressed was Elphinstone with the idea that he was rushing on his destruction, that he wrote him a letter after he left him, entreating him to be cautious; but it never reached its destination. The parties met on a hillock near the banks of the river, about six hundred yards from the cantonments. The English officers and Affghan chiefs exchanged salutations, and Akbar Khan received with many thanks an Arab horse, which he had greatly coveted, and expressed his gratitude also for a pair of pistols he had been presented with on the preceding day. It was then proposed that the whole party should dismount, which was accordingly done. Akbar Khan asked Macnaghten if he was

ready to carry out the proposals of the preceding evening? "Why not?" said the latter. The Affghans by this time were closing round the circle in great numbers, which Lawrence and Mackenzie observed, and requested they might be removed to a greater distance, as the conference was a secret one. The chiefs then lashed out with their whips at the closing circle, and at the same time Akbar said it was of no consequence, as they were all in the secret, at the same time saying aloud, "Seize! Seize!" Scarcely were the words uttered, when the envoy and whole party were violently seized from behind. The envoy was dragged along by Akbar himself; and as he struggled violently, the Affghan drew one of the pistols with which he had been presented on the preceding day, and shot him through the back. A crowd of Ghazees rushed in and completed his destruction with their knives, by which he was literally cut to pieces. His mangled remains were carried to the great bazaar, where they were shown to admiring and applauding multitudes; and his right hand was cut off, and exhibited at a window. Trevor was massacred on the spot; Lawrence and Mackenzie, almost by a miracle, reached Mahommed Khan's fort prisoners, but alive.*

50. In forming an opinion on this sad event, it is evident, in the first place, that Akbar Khan and the Affghan chiefs around him were guilty of the foulest and most abominable treachery in the murders which were committed. The envoy was at a conference which they themselves had proposed, accompanied only by his staff-officers: no hostility on his part was either designed or possible; the character of an ambassador is sacred by the laws of all nations, even the most barbarous. At first sight it seems that Macnaghten's conduct was also open to exception in point of morality as well as prudence, because he went to the conference in order to arrange a plan for the seizure of forts

* This graphic account of Macnaghten's death is taken, almost *verbatim*, from KAYE, ii. 149, 153.

ceded by the treaty, and some of the chiefs at that time in dubious and insincere alliance with the British. But in answer to this, it must be recollected that the envoy stood in a very different situation from what he would have done had he been dealing with European diplomatists, with whom performance of engagements may generally be depended on. The Affghan chiefs had violated the treaty in every particular; rigidly exacting the performance of their obligations by the British, they had scarcely performed one of the stipulations agreed to by themselves. Sir William Macnaghten's position was a desperate one; he hazarded all upon a single throw, but that throw offered, in circumstances otherwise hopeless, a fair chance of saving the army and the honour of the country. History cannot condemn him, if, dealing with an artful and treacherous enemy, with no other chance of escape for himself or his troops, he sought to circumvent him by his own method, and must applaud the magnanimity with which, even in the last extremity, he refused to stain his hands with blood, and freely offered his own life to a foe whose hostility he disdained to deprecate by the sacrifice of another.

51. So completely were the energies of the once brave and powerful British army paralysed by the disasters they had undergone, and their want of confidence in the chiefs by whom they were led, that even this terrible disaster could not rouse them from the state of despair and apathy in which they were plunged. "The envoy," says Kaye, "had been killed in broad day, and upon the open plain, but not a gun was fired from the ramparts of the cantonments, not a company of troops sallied out to rescue or revenge. The body of the British minister was left to be hacked to pieces, and his mangled remains were paraded in barbarous triumph about the streets and banners of the city." Eldred Pottinger, whose heroism had saved Herat, and who had become political agent on Macnaghten's death, in vain endeavoured to infuse into the other chiefs

a portion of his own undaunted spirit. The day after the massacre the draft of a new treaty was sent in to General Elphinstone, substantially the same as the former one, but with this difference, that it was now proposed that "the guns, except six, ordnance stores, and muskets, in excess of these in use, shall be given up, and six hostages given for the safe return of Dost Mahommed and his family." Pottinger strenuously opposed these conditions, and said that now was the time to fling themselves into the Bala-Hissar, or fight their way down, sword in hand, to Jellalabad. Letters were at the same time received from Jellalabad and Peshawur, announcing the reinforcements which were on their way from India, and urging Elphinstone to hold out. But Shelton pronounced the occupation of the Bala-Hissar to be "impracticable;" and after making the most strenuous resistance, Pottinger was obliged to give in, and agree to the terms proposed. The treaty was finally ratified on the 1st January 1842.*

52. When the guns came to be given up, the agony of their humiliation burst at once on the unhappy soldiers;

* "The General, from his illness, was incapable of making up his mind; and the constant assertion of the impossibility by his second in command, outweighed the entreaties of the envoy when alive, and of mine after; and a retreat on Jellalabad was the only thing they would hear of, notwithstanding that I pointed out the very doubtful character of any engagement we might make with the insurgents, the probability that they would not make it good, and begged that they would spare us the dishonour, and the Government the loss, which any negotiation must entail. In a council of war held at the General's house, Shelton, Anquetil, Chambers, Grant, and Bellew present, every one voted to the contrary—so, seeing I could do nothing, I consented. At the time we had but two courses open to us, which, in my opinion, promised a chance of saving our honour and part of the army: one was, to occupy the Bala-Hissar and hold it till spring—by this we should have had the best chance of success; the other was, to have abandoned our camp and baggage and encumbrances, and forced our way down. This was perilous, but practicable. However, I could not persuade them to sacrifice baggage, and that was eventually one of the chief causes of our disasters."—MAJOR POTTINGER to CAPTAIN M'GREGOR; MS. Records; KAYE, II. 179.

and the murmur was loud in the camp, that any attempt, however desperate, should be risked, rather than submit to such an indignity. But the chief saw no alternative, and all that Pottinger could do was to procrastinate, and give up the Shah's cannon two at a time only to the enemy. At length, however, the guns, muskets, waggons, and ammunition, except the six cannons reserved, were all given up, and the hostages put into the enemy's hands. The Affghans were very anxious to get some of the ladies and married men into their possession; but this was positively refused, and not farther insisted on at that time. On the 29th December such of the sick and wounded as could not bear the journey down were sent into the city, and every preparation made for the march which circumstances would admit. But these circumstances were wretched in the extreme, and indicated too surely the fate which awaited the attempt. The Affghans, hovering round the walls, insulted the British at their very gates, interrupted the supplies obtained with such difficulty by the commissariat, and assailed the drivers. Already it was evident that no reliance whatever could be placed on the promise to furnish provisions to the troops on the march, and that the army would set out into a snowy wilderness of mountains without either ammunition, food, tents, or carriage. When these acts of depredation were complained of to the chiefs, they coolly answered that they could not prevent them, and that the British should themselves fire on the wretches concerned; but this was deemed too hazardous, as tending directly to a renewal of hostilities.

53. At length, on 6th January, the march commenced, under circumstances of depression unparalleled in the annals of mankind; for when the French set out from Moscow, their army, 90,000 strong, and with all their guns and ammunition complete, was, comparatively speaking, in a prosperous condition. The situation of the troops is thus described in the eloquent words of an eyewitness: "At length the fatal morning dawned which was

to witness the departure of the Cabul force from the cantonments in which it had sustained a two months' siege, to encounter the miseries of a winter march through a country of perhaps unparalleled difficulty, where every mountain defile, if obstinately defended by a determined enemy, must inevitably prove the grave of hundreds. Dreary, indeed, was the scene over which, with drooping spirits and dismal forebodings, we had to bend our unwilling steps. Deep snow covered every inch of mountain and plain with one unspotted sheet of dazzling white; and so intensely bitter was the cold, as to penetrate and defy the defences of the warmest clothing. Sad and suffering issued from the British cantonments a confused mass of Europeans and Asiatics, a mingled crowd of combatants and non-combatants, of men of various climes and complexion and habits—part of them peculiarly unfitted to endure the hardships of a rigorous climate, and many of a sex and tender age which in general exempts them from such scenes of horror." The number of the crowd was large—4500 fighting men, of whom 700 were Europeans, with six guns and three mountain-train pieces, and upwards of 12,000 camp-followers. The advance began to issue from the cantonments at nine in the morning, and from that time till dark the huge and motley crowd continued to pour out of the gates, which were immediately occupied by a crowd of fanatical Affghans, who rent the air with their exulting cries, and fired without scruple on the retiring troops, by which fifty men were killed. When the cantonments were cleared, all order was lost, and troops, and camp-followers, and horses, and foot-soldiers, baggage, public and private, became involved in one inextricable confusion. "The shadows of night overtook the huge multitude while still pushing their weary course; but the cold surface of the snow reflected the glow of light from the flames of the British residency, and other buildings, to which the Affghans had applied the torch the moment they were evacuated by our

troops. Weary and desperate, the men lay down on the snow without either food, fire, or covering; and great numbers were frozen to death before the first rays of the sun gilded the summits of the mountains." *

54. Disastrous as were the circumstances under which this terrible march commenced, they were much aggravated on the succeeding day. All order was then lost—not a semblance even of military array was kept up save with the rearguard; while numbers of Affghans, evidently moving parallel to the retreating multitude, showed themselves on the heights above, and, in open defiance of the capitulation, commenced a fire upon them. They even attacked the rearguard, and after a violent struggle took the mountain-guns, which, though immediately retaken by Lieutenant Green, could not be brought away, and were spiked amidst the gleaming sabres of the enemy. "Two other guns were soon after abandoned, as the horses were unable to drag them through the snow. Although at nightfall they had only accomplished six miles of their wearisome journey, the road was covered with dying wretches perishing under the intolerable cold. The sepoys, patient and resigned, sank on the line of march, awaiting death. Horses, ponies, baggage-waggons, camp-followers, and soldiers were confusedly huddled, while over the dense mass the jezails of the Affghans, posted on the rocks and heights above, sent a storm of balls, every one of which took effect among the multitude. The enemy severely pressed on our rear, and three out of the four remaining guns fell into their hands. The soldiers, weary, starving, and frost-bitten, could no longer make any resistance. There was no hope but in the fidelity of Zemaun Khan, who had always been true to us; but although he had exerted himself to procure supplies, scarcely any were got. Meanwhile the attacks of the Affghans continued without intermission."

55. The army was in this dreadful

* EYRE'S *Journals*, 214, 220; and KAYE, II. 218, 224.

state when, on the morning of the 8th, it arrived at the entrance of the Coord Cabul defile. It is five miles in length, and bounded on either side with steep overhanging mountains. It is so narrow, the sun never penetrates its gloomy jaws; there is barely room for a rugged road or horse-track between the torrent and the precipices. The stream dashes down the whole way with inconceivable impetuosity, and requires to be crossed eight-and-twenty times in the course of the ascent. To add to the horrors of this defile, the frost had covered the road and edges of the torrent with a coating of ice, on which the beasts of burden could find no secure footing, and in attempting to pass which great numbers slipped, fell into the water, and were swept down by its resistless rush. The heights above were crowded with Affghans, who, securely posted on the summits of precipices inaccessible from the bottom of the ravine, kept up an incessant fire on the confused and trembling multitude which was struggling through the defile beneath. All order was soon lost, if any still remained. Baggage, ammunition, property, public and private, were abandoned at every step; and so complete was the paralysis, that the sepoys allowed their muskets to be taken out of their hands without attempting any resistance. The massacre was terrible in this frightful defile. Three thousand perished under the balls or knives of the Affghans; and in the midst of the confusion of this scene of carnage, the English ladies, who accompanied the columns on horseback, often strained their eyes in vain to descry their children, lost in the horrors in which they were enveloped.

56. Such of the troops as contrived to get through this dreadful defile had fresh difficulties of a different kind to contend with. The road now ascended the high table-land of Coord Cabul, and the snow fell in great quantities, rendering it in many places impassable for animals or carriages. A cold biting-wind from the north-east swept over the lofty bare surface, rendering

it almost certain death to sit down, however wearied the wretches might be. Here, however, the whole army were obliged to bivouac, without covering, fire, or shelter of any kind. There were only four tents left; one was given to the General, two to the ladies, and one to the sick. In compliance with a recommendation from Akbar Khan, the army halted for a day; but the inexpedience of this delay was so evident that a great part of the native troops and camp-followers moved on without any order, and the sepoy began to desert in great numbers. Akbar Khan, seeing the troops reduced to this woeful plight, now renewed his demand for the giving up of the married officers *and their wives*, he promising to keep them a day's march in the rear of the army, and in perfect safety. Heartrending as this proposal was to honourable and gallant men, no resistance was made to it—so evident to all was the necessity of the case, and so certain the destruction which awaited them if they remained with the remnant of the troops. Soon after the whole ladies, with their husbands, escorted by a troop of Affghan horse, set out for the rear of the army, and were placed in the power of the treacherous barbarian who had so recently imbrued his hands in the blood of the confiding and honourable British envoy.

57. The European soldiers were now (10th January) almost the only efficient troops left. The sepoy, unaccustomed to a rigorous climate, had almost all sunk, or been slain by the Affghans. Nearly all of them were frost-bitten in the hands, face, or feet; few were able to hold a musket, much less draw a trigger; the prolonged march in the snow had paralysed the mental and physical powers even of the strongest men. "Hope," says Eyre, "seemed to have died in every breast; the wildness of terror was exhibited in every countenance." The end was now approaching. At the entrance of a narrow gorge, where the road passed between two hills, a strong body of Affghan marksmen appeared, who barred all farther passage, and

kept up so heavy a fire on the column as it approached, that the whole sepoy broke and fled. Seeing this, the Affghans rushed down, sword in hand, captured the public treasure, and all of the baggage which hitherto had been preserved. A hundred and fifty cavalry troopers, fifty horse-artillerymen, one hundred and forty of the 44th, and one gun, alone forced their way through, and formed now the sole remaining fighting men of the army. Akbar proposed a surrender to this little body; but they indignantly rejected the proposal, and pushed on, sword in hand, through the crowds of camp-followers, bands of Affghans, and the snowy wilderness.

58. Still hovering round the rearguard, the Affghan horsemen continued the pursuit of the miserable but undaunted band of men who, in defiance of all obstacles, continued their course. Oppressed by a crowd of camp-followers, and almost as much impeded by them as by their enemies, the wreck of the British force made its desperate way down the steep descent of the Haft-Kotul, strewn with the melancholy remains of camp-followers, and soldiers who had formed the advance of the column. As they passed downwards to Fezzen, a heavy fire was opened on the flanks of the column; but the rearguard, led by Shelton, with invincible firmness repelled the assault, and for a time preserved the remnant of the force from destruction. Seeing ruin inevitable if a start was not gained upon the enemy, Shelton proposed a night-march, in the hope of shaking off the crowd of camp-followers which, from the very beginning, had clung to them, and proved as injurious as the jezails of the enemy. Having spiked their last gun, they set off at ten at night; but the alarm had spread to the camp-followers, and they clustered round them as ruinously as before. It was a clear frosty night, and for some hours the march was unmolested; but before morning the enemy overtook the rear, and opened a fire on the dark moving

mass, which impelled the terrified crowd of camp-followers upon the few soldiers in front, and, blocking up the road, rendered it necessary for the rearguard to force a passage through at the bayonet's point. When the way was at length cleared, a dense mass of Affghans was found crowning the heights in front and barring any farther — but the little band of European heroes, led by Shelton, kept the enemy in the rear in check, and gallantly forced their way through to Jugdulluck. Here the men lay down in the snow to gain a few hours' rest, after thirty hours' incessant marching and waking; but hardly had they done so when a fire was opened upon them by the Affghans, and they were compelled once more to fight. The enemy, however, deterred by their resolution, fled on their approach; and the wearied column returned to Jugdulluck, where they remained, under the shelter of a ruined wall, but still exposed to the fire of the Affghans, all the succeeding day.

59. Here the conferences were resumed, and Akbar Khan insisted upon General Elphinstone, Brigadier Shelton, and Captain Johnson, remaining hostages in his hands for the evacuation of Jellalabad. This was not at first agreed to, and these officers repaired to the Affghan chief's headquarters to arrange the terms, where they were detained by force, in defiance of the sacred character as pacific negotiators. Elphinstone and Shelton remained in Akbar Khan's hands; and Johnson, who understood Persian, overheard the party who surrounded them conversing in that language on the pleasure they would have in cutting the Feringhees' throats. The remaining body of the British, now reduced to one hundred and forty-five fighting men, resumed their march at nightfall on the 12th, and plunged into the deep and gloomy Jugdulluck Pass. On approaching the summit, they found the mouth blocked by a ~~bar~~ barricade, from behind which the Affghans threw in volley after volley on the str ~~.....~~ Brigadier Anteq

Major Thain, and Captain Nicholl, fell and died. Not above twenty officers and forty men succeeded in forcing the fatal barrier. Their only hope consisted in straggling on ahead of their pursuers to Jellalabad. As day dawned they approached Gundamuck; but there their numerical weakness became visible, and they were again surrounded by a body of the enemy. Captain Souter tied the colours of his regiment round his waist, by which they were preserved, and the unconquerable band of heroes pursued their way on, though sorely weakened at every step. In a desperate struggle, on leaving Gundamuck, nearly every man in the British party was either killed or wounded. Twelve officers and a few cavalry, all bleeding, rode ahead of the troop, and all but six of them dropped down from their horses before reaching Futtehabad. This small remnant was treacherously assailed there, when taking food, by the natives, who had professed sympathy, and began by showing kindness; two were slain, the others reached their horses and escaped. All perished, however, EXCEPTING ONE MAN, Dr Brydon, before reaching Jellalabad. Worn out and wounded, he had struggled on, borne by a jaded pony, till the walls of the fortress appeared in sight. He was descried from the ramparts, and brought in by a party sent to succour him, being the SOLE SURVIVOR, not a captive, of the Affghan-istan expedition.

60. While, however, the honour of the British name was thus tarnished at Cabul, Sir Robert Sale at Jellalabad, and General Nott at Candahar, nobly vindicated it, and gave a proof of what might have been done, with the much larger force than they had at their disposal, if similar capacity and resolution had been displayed at Cabul. Sale had been required, under the conditions of the treaty concluded by Macnaghten, to evacuate Jellalabad; but when summoned by Akbar Khan and the envoy to fulfil that stipulation, he answered, well knowing the treachery of the chiefs with whom he had to deal, that as he was aware the

chiefs in the neighbourhood were inciting their followers to destroy the garrison of Jellalabad, he deemed it proper to await further orders before obeying the summons; and requested to know, before leaving the fortress, what security would be given for the safe conduct of the troops to Peshawur. A similar answer was returned by Nott from Candahar, and when intelligence arrived of the massacre of the Cabul army in defiance of the convention, both these gallant officers held out and preserved these important fortresses for the British forces. In them, under the gallant lead of Pollock, Monteith Douglas, Sale, and Nott, began the glorious operations which redeemed the honour of the British name, and led to triumphs so transcendent as to throw all the previous disasters into the shade.

61. But the return of prosperous days, however glorious to the nation, came too late to redeem the character or lighten the load of anxiety which oppressed the Government. The mournful intelligence from Cabul reached Lord Auckland in the end of January. The previous month had been one of intense anxiety, relieved only at distant intervals by gleams of hope arising from the heroic conduct of the garrison of Jellalabad, to be recounted in a future chapter. But no apprehensions could equal the terrible reality, when the dismal intelligence arrived that only one man had survived, not a captive, out of seventeen thousand souls who had set out on their homeward journey from Cabul. The blow was stunning to the Governor-General, and the more so that the termination of his government was drawing near, and he had no time to repair the errors of his administration. Such was the consternation which prevailed, that little or nothing except ordering up a few regiments to Peshawur was done to arrest the calamity. Lord Auckland now saw clearly the disastrous consequences of the policy which he had been persuaded to adopt in regard to Afghanistan; and he returned home, sad and dispirited, in the spring of 1842. He was succeeded by Lord

Ellenborough, who had been selected as Governor-General by Sir Robert Peel on his accession to office in October 1841, and arrived in Calcutta on 28th February.

62. Overwhelming from its magnitude, heartrending from its suffering, awful from its completeness, the Afghanistan disaster is one of the most memorable events of modern times. Rivalling the first Crusade in the entire destruction with which it was attended, the Moscow campaign in the terrible features by which it was distinguished, it will long rivet the attention of man. Without doubt, it must be regarded by those who contemplate national events as regulated by an overruling Providence, as a signal example of retributive justice—as the punishment of a nation for the glaring and unpardonable crimes of its rulers. The danger against which the expedition beyond the Indus was intended to guard, was neither remote nor imaginary; on the contrary, it was both real and pressing. Nothing could be more just or necessary than to take steps against the peril which the Russian subjugation of Persia, the attack on Herat, and the intrigues at Cabul, so clearly revealed. Policy, not less than the primary duty of self-defence, required that the British interest in Afghanistan should be strengthened, and a barrier opposed in its defiles against the oft-repeated northern invasion. But the British Government had no right, in the prosecution of this object, to overturn the reigning power in an independent kingdom—to force a hated dynasty on a reluctant people. The object might have been accomplished without the violation of any right, at scarcely any expense, and without the incurring of any risk. Dost Mahommed, the ruler of the nation's choice, was not only willing, but anxious, to enter into the British alliance, and for a comparatively trifling sum shut the gates of India for ever against the Muscovite battalions. When, therefore, instead of closing with his proposals, we resolved to dethrone him, and to force a hated king again upon the nation, in order that

he might be a mere puppet in our hands, we committed as great a mistake in policy as a crime in morality.

63. But although every serious observer must discern in the fate of this memorable expedition an instance of the manner in which signal national crimes even in this world work out their own punishment, yet, humanly speaking, it is not difficult to discern the causes to which it was immediately owing. Conceived in injustice, it was cradled in error, and executed by incapacity. In the original plan of the campaign every military principle was violated; in carrying it out, every rule of military experience was disregarded. Throwing an expedition forward a thousand miles from its base of operations, through a desert, mountainous, and difficult country, inhabited by fierce and barbarous tribes, the Indian Government repeated the error which had proved fatal to Napoleon in the Moscow campaign. But it did not, like him, seek to repair the mistake by moving up strong bodies of men to keep up the communications with the rear. The force with which the expedition was undertaken—under ten thousand fighting men, including only four European regiments—was altogether inadequate to both conquering the country, and keeping up the communications. Forty thousand men, including ten thousand Europeans, would not have been too many for such an undertaking; and there never was a third of that number at the disposal of the commanders in Affghanistan.

64. This deficiency of force, and its disproportion to the object in view, was the result mainly of the great and ruinous pacific reductions which had taken place during the years of political hallucination which followed the passing of the Reform Bill in England. True, the military forces were rapidly increased as the necessities of the campaign unfolded themselves, and before they were closed the forces were again restored to their old level, of whom ~~about~~ 40,000 were Europeans; but that only changed the quarter in which danger was to be apprehended—it did not remove it. The new recruits were

very different from the old soldiers; and the infusion of a large body of these young and inexperienced men into the regiments, by the augmentation of the number of companies in each, weakened in a most serious degree the efficiency and steadiness of the whole. It was repeatedly observed during the Affghanistan campaign, that the troops, both native and European, failed at the decisive moment; and people asked, Are those the soldiers of Clive and Lake, of Wellington and Abercromby? In truth, they were not the soldiers of these men, though they wore the same dress, and bore the same arms. You cannot make a civilian a soldier in a few months, by merely putting arms into his hands and a uniform on his back. Years of military life, and acting together in circumstances of difficulty and danger, are indispensable to form that coolness in peril, and that thorough confidence between officers and men, which form the strength of real soldiers. The idea that you may without risk disband a veteran force on the return of peace, because you can raise a new one in a few months when war again breaks out, is one of the most fallacious that can possibly be entertained, and to which the disasters which have uniformly befallen the British nation, in the first years of every new war for a century and a half, are mainly to be ascribed.

65. Connected with this source of weakness and danger is another, which is peculiar to the Indian army, and that is the great number of officers who, during peace, were withdrawn from their regiments, and intrusted with diplomatic duties as political agents. Economy, and a desire to run two services into one, was the mainspring of this system, and it is hard to say whether it proved most injurious to the civil or military service. To the former it brought an undue confidence in military knowledge, and induced a jealousy between the two services, by leading the young military political agent to assume the direction of the military movements, which he was often neither entitled

nor qualified to do. In the latter it induced, without the abandonment of the military life, an entire ignorance of its details, and incapacity for its duties. The young political agent, accustomed to command, and to act as a sort of viceroy over some protected potentate, suddenly found himself, when hostilities broke out, recalled to his regiment, and immediately intrusted with the discharge of arduous and important military duties. He was then surrounded by soldiers to whom he was unknown, as much as they were to him. The first forenoon of real service in the field or in the trenches often revealed to the men under his command the incapacity of their new officer to direct them; and after that had been discovered, how was it possible that mutual confidence could be re-established, or either the officers lead or the men follow, in moments of difficulty or danger, as they ought? To this cause much of the errors in judgment, evinced in separate command by the officers, and of the timidity shown by the men in following their always gallant lead, is to be ascribed. The economists say that such a union of the two services is indispensable, in order to keep down the otherwise insupportable expenses with which the administration of affairs in India is attended; and possibly it is so. But that only shows that a system of government by one country at the distance of fourteen thousand miles from another is exposed to difficulty, and involves in itself the seeds of its own ruin, not that the system itself is not dangerous and big with future disaster.

66. Even with all these disadvantageous circumstances, although ultimate and entire success was hopeless, yet the extreme disaster which was sustained might have been avoided, had it not been for the obvious and almost inexplicable errors committed in the military arrangements when the final catastrophe approached. The neglect to occupy and strengthen the Bala-Hissar as the centre of our military operations; the mistake in placing the troops in exposed and exten-

sive cantonments ill-fortified; and, above all, the extraordinary fault of putting the whole magazines and commissariat stores in an undefended position, and in a manner at the mercy of the enemy, brought us into extreme peril. They are mainly to be ascribed, in the first instance at least, to Sir W. Macnaghten, who did much, however, to redeem these fatal errors by the courage he evinced when the danger came on, and the intrepid counsels which he in a manner forced upon the old and infirm commander-in-chief. With these immense mistakes General Elphinstone has no concern, for they were all committed, or in course of execution, when he assumed the command. But he is responsible for the want of decision and vigour evinced when the crisis arrived, and it had become evident that nothing but the utmost rapidity and resolution could avert the most terrible disasters. Had two thousand men and eight or ten guns been sent from the cantonments into the rebellious city when the insurrection first broke out, it would have been at once suppressed; had the troops and stores been moved into the Bala-Hissar when it was evident it had become serious, the army would have been in safety all winter, and might have calmly awaited its liberation by the arms of Pollock and Nott in the ensuing spring. Whereas, by temporising, and adopting no decided line, the only means of salvation yet remaining were thrown away, and disasters unheard-of were induced.

67. Instead, however, of joining in the general chorus of abuse which has been levelled at the heads of the brave but ill-fated and unhappy men, who have now expiated with their lives any errors they may have committed, it is more material, as well as just, to endeavour to trace out the faulty national dispositions which have led to such men being intrusted with the administration of affairs so momentous, that it may be said the Indian empire hung upon their decisions. Macnaghten induced the danger by being oversanguine, and shutting his eyes to its approach when every one else saw it.

was coming on. Elphinstone precipitated the catastrophe by want of decision and vigour when it arrived. This is now sufficiently evident; but the material point is, how did it happen that men who proved themselves so unfit for these momentous duties were intrusted with their discharge, when so many others perfectly qualified to have discharged them were passed over? That is the really important question; for unless this cause is discovered and removed, the nation may with certainty look for a repetition of similar disasters upon every fresh breaking-out of hostilities.

68. The popular party will exclaim that it is all to be ascribed to the aristocratic direction of military affairs in this country; that General Elphinstone was an old and infirm man, incapable of discharging the duties with which he was intrusted, and that that was the sole cause of the disaster. To this it seems sufficient to observe, that the misfortunes occurred when the popular regime was fully established in every department of the State; that Elphinstone was appointed by a Whig Governor-General, with the concurrence of a Whig Cabinet, and that the army he commanded had been formed and moulded for ten years previously on popular principles, and by popularly-appointed Governor-Generals and agents. It is in vain to ascribe, therefore, to aristocratic influence at the head of affairs a disaster which occurred when that influence was more in abeyance than it had ever been in English history, and when the popular influences from which so much was expected had been for many years in full and unrestricted activity.

69. The truth is, the disasters in Affghanistan, so far as the military conduct of affairs is concerned, were owing to a cause unhappily of more general efficacy, and therefore more to be feared, than the delinquencies of any party, either aristocratic, monarchic, or democratic. This is the tendency during peace of influential incapacity to acquire the direction of military affairs. In war this is in a great measure prevented by the im-

mediate and obvious peril with which the faulty direction of armies is then attended, and the rapidity with which the penalty of the appointment of incompetent officers is followed to the peccant Government. But during peace it is possible to make the most unsuitable appointments without their consequences being immediately felt: many a general can make a tolerable figure at reviews, or in conducting the civil affairs of an army, who breaks down at once in presence of an enemy, or under the pressure of real danger. If a peace is very long, this peril is greatly increased, because, in addition to the ordinary danger of improper pacific appointments, there is the risk of aged incompetence being thrust upon the public service. As this danger arises from the principles of human nature, it remains the same in whatever political party the government of the State is vested. By popularising institutions, the danger, instead of being diminished, is materially increased. There are, in proportion to their numbers, as many imbeciles in the middle or lower ranks as in the higher, and therefore the only effect of augmenting the number of persons who are politically invested with the power of influencing Government, is to augment the number of incompetent persons who are forced by them to the head of affairs. There never was a country so much governed by incompetent generals as France was, from this cause; under the popular sway of the Directory, which caused it to lose the whole conquests of the Revolution, and the evil was never abated till the lead fell into the iron grasp of Napoleon.

70. The only way to obviate this most serious evil, which continually, on the termination of a long peace, threatens the very existence of the State, is to turn the stream of influential fools in another direction, and make it *for their own interest* to permit that direction to be followed. This is to be done, and can only be secured, by the method which experience has suggested as alone effectual in public companies or offices—viz., by

allotting adequate *retired allowances* to induce men incapacitated by age or infirmity to withdraw from their public functions. Necessity has long ago established this in the case of judges and all important civil functionaries; and a sense of its expedience has caused the same system to be adopted very generally in banks, railway and insurance companies, and other establishments where particular officers are intrusted with important duties. Unfortunately, however, the general jealousy of the army, and of the aristocratic influence which is supposed to regulate its appointments, has not only prevented any similar system being established in the higher grades of that service, but has cut away the few which in former times in some degree supplied its place. Nearly all military sinecures or retired allowances and appointments have been cut off during the quarter of a century of popular government which has elapsed since the Peace. The half-pay of a general—seldom more than two per cent. on what he has paid for his commission—cannot be regarded as any adequate allowance for an officer who has held, perhaps, a governorship worth £3000 or £4000 a-year. Thus the superior officers, both of the army and navy, are compelled to *cling to active employment* as the only means of averting poverty and insignificance, and to bring into play the whole influence they can command to prevent their being deprived of it. This is the real cause of the number of influential but incapable men who, on the breaking out of a war after a long peace, are generally found to be at the head of affairs both in the army and navy.

71. Two dangers, of different kinds, but each most formidable in its way, thus beset every constitutional monarchy on the occurrence of war after a long peace. Democratic economy starves down the establishment, both by land and sea, to the very lowest point, and cuts off the whole sinecures or offices which might serve as retreats to influential imbecility, while aristocratic cupidity or parliamentary in-

fluence fasten with resistless grasp on the active employments, and force numbers of old men, gallant and respectable, but past the possibility of useful service, upon the Government. The Affghanistan expedition afforded one memorable example of this, the Crimean has exhibited a second. General Elphinstone was a gallant Waterloo veteran of high connection and most pleasing manners. Ensnared in a quiet governorship of £1500 a-year, he would have passed the close of his life in peaceful respectability, beloved by all who approached him. Placed at the head of the army in Affghanistan *because he was highly supported, and there was nowhere else to put him*, he lost an army, and all but lost an empire. Of all the sums expended by a nation, there is none so well bestowed as that which provides an easy and secure retreat for such men in the public service as are too influential to be overlooked, and yet too weakly by nature, or far advanced in years, to be able to discharge its duties with advantage. A hundred thousand a-year would be well bestowed in providing these harbours of refuge for powerfully supported incapacity. Of all the economies forced upon a popular government by the public voice, there is none so loudly applauded at the moment, and none so ruinous in the end, as that which cuts off all honourable and respectable retreats for veterans who have spent the best part of their lives in the service of their country, or younger men who are not equal to its duties. Such men will always be found in the public service; no initial examination or popularising of institutions can keep them out. On the contrary, they only add to their number, because they induce a greater number to clamour for admission, and bring more numerous interests to support their claims. It is in vain to think of closing the door against them; some ruling power in the State—aristocratic, democratic, or monarchical—will always get them in. The only wisdom is to establish institutions which shall facilitate their timely retreat.

CHAPTER XLIX.

ENGLAND, FROM THE ACCESSION OF SIR R. PEEL TO POWER IN NOVEMBER 1841, TO THE PASSING OF THE BANK CHARTER ACT IN JUNE 1844.

1. SIR ROBERT PEEL, who was now, by a concurrence of parties, and the experienced weakness of former governments, again elevated by a decisive majority to power, was one of those men who have been so variously painted by their contemporaries, and so differently mirrored by their actions, that their real character will for ever remain a perplexing enigma to future ages. All public men, whose deeds have left a permanent impress on the surface of public affairs, are of course represented in opposite colours by party writers of opposite principles; and it is generally from a comparison of both, as from the conflicting evidence in a criminal trial, that the verdict of posterity is formed. But in Sir R. Peel's case this ordinary difficulty is enhanced by the singular circumstance that he has been variously represented, not only by writers of different parties, but by writers of the same party at different times. In the early period of his career he was the chosen champion of the Church and High Tory principles, and in a similar degree the object of obloquy to the Whigs: in his late years he was a still greater object of laudation to the Liberals and vituperation to the Conservatives. It is difficult to say whether, prior to 1829, the "bigot Peel" was more vehemently denounced by the Irish Catholics and English Liberals, than the "apostate Peel" was, after 1846, by his early friends and supporters; while the blame of this latter party has been since that time almost drowned in the loud and impassioned applause of the ruling Liberal majority in the State.

2. No one need be told to what this singular and almost unprecedented

change of opinion, in both the parties which divide the country, has been owing. Sir R. Peel, at different times of his life, was not only actuated by opposite principles, but he was, in appearance at least, a different man. The steady, uncompromising opponent of Catholic claims became their most decided and successful supporter; the resolute enemy of free trade in corn turned into its unqualified advocate; and on both occasions he exerted the powers with which he had been intrusted by those hostile to the alteration to insure its unqualified adoption. Changes so prodigious occurring in one so highly gifted, and wielding, in a manner, the whole political power in the State, excited more than the ordinary amount of political enmity and antagonism; they engendered a feeling of disappointed expectation, and awakened the pangs of betrayed affection. Confidence not only in him, but in all public men of the age, was shaken by so flagrant a deviation from declared principles; and all parties—even those most benefited by the sudden and unexpected conversion—concurred in the melancholy conclusion, that the time was past when consistency of political conduct was to be expected in public men; that frequency of change had produced its usual effect in destroying fixity of purpose; and that we had fallen into such days as those when a Marlborough was elevated to the height of greatness by betraying one sovereign, and Ney suffered the death of a traitor for attempting to betray another.

3. It is not surprising, when the circumstances of these two memorable conversions are considered, that feelings of this warm and impassioned

kind should have arisen in the party which, twice over, saw their most cherished system of policy overturned by their chosen champion. But a calm consideration of the case must, in justice to Sir R. Peel, very materially modify these opinions. The analogy seems at first sight just between a political chief altering his policy in government, and a general betraying his sovereign in the field of battle; but in reality it is not so. There is no parallelism between the situation of a soldier and a statesman. Fidelity to king and country will admit of no equivocation; but adherence, under changing circumstances, to preconceived opinions, so far from being always a political virtue, may often be the greatest political fault. It may lead to public ruin. Prince Polignac was quite consistent through life, and, as such, he must command the respect of every honourable mind; but what did his consistency lead to? A great general is not he who always takes the same position, but he who, in all circumstances, takes the position most likely to be attended at the time with success. In this world of change, and in an age pre-eminently distinguished by it, undeviating adherence to expressed thought is *impossible* in a statesman who is to remain long in office; for his power being built on opinion, he must go with that opinion, or it will be immediately shattered. Consistency of opinion may be expected in an author who treats of past events, or a philosopher who discourses on their tendencies, for they address themselves to future ages, when the immutable laws of nature will be seen to have been unceasingly acting in the mighty maze; but a statesman in a free government, who must act on the present, can only wield power by means of the multitude, and to do so with effect he must often share their versatility. Mr Pitt and Mr Burke themselves changed: the former was at first a parliamentary reformer; the latter, in early life, a strenuous supporter of revolution in America. The real reproach against Sir R. Peel is, not that he changed his views, but that he made use of power

conferred by one party to carry through the objects of their opponents; a course which, however it may be attended with success, it will be no easy matter for his warmest panegyrists to defend.

4. It is commonly said, in explanation of this tendency to change, which formed so remarkable a feature in his character, that Sir R. Peel, though personally brave, was politically timid; that he entertained a nervous dread of revolution, and that the moment he saw a course of policy was likely to be attended with danger, he relinquished it, and passed over with all his forces to the victorious side. There can be no doubt that at first sight this seems a very plausible theory to explain the phenomenon. But a closer examination of his political career will show that it too is erroneous, and that a want of moral courage can by no means be justly imputed as a failing to Sir R. Peel. On the contrary, he frequently exhibited firmness and resolution in the very highest degree, both in external and internal affairs. Witness his noble conduct on learning the Affghanistan disaster in 1841, which, after a calamity unparalleled since the destruction of the legions of Varus, again chained victory to the British standards in India; and his intrepid self-sacrifice to what he deemed the good of his country in the emancipation of the Catholics in 1829. Even his crowning act of self-immolation, when he repealed the Corn Laws in 1846, in opposition to the tenor of an entire lifetime, was anything but an indication of political weakness. To a man of his sensitive temperament, and so passionately desirous of preserving the lead of the noble party he had so long headed in the House of Commons, the averted eye, the unreturned pressure of the hand, were more terrible than the most signal political defeat; and the ambition of a lifetime was more thoroughly sacrificed by a change which necessarily alienated the warmest friends, than if he had been consigned, like Strafford, to the dungeon and the scaffold. But he felt, doubt-

ness, a yet nobler ambition than that of leading a party or ruling an empire. His feeling was—

“Th’ applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o’er a smiling land,
And read his history in a nation’s eyes.”

5. Sir Robert Peel was not a man of original genius or inventive thought: there is *no* single *idée mère* can be traced to him through his whole career. “Register, register, register,” was not his own; he borrowed it from a celebrated political journal, generally in opposition to himself, where it is to be found years before he ever gave utterance to the counsel.* His mind was adoptive, not creative: he was the mirror of the age, not its director: his leading ideas and principles were taken from others. In monetary affairs he only elaborated the ideas of Mr Horner and Mr Ricardo, first enunciated in the Bullion Report. In supporting the Corn Laws he adopted the arguments of Lord Liverpool and Lord Castlereagh; in assailing them, those of Mr Bright and Mr Cobden. It was the same with Catholic Emancipation: his arguments, admirable on both sides, were alternately borrowed from those of Lord Liverpool and Mr Perceval, of Mr Canning and Mr Plunkett. It was this which suggested to Mr Disraeli the felicitous expression, that his mind

* “A considerable proportion of the present voters are, from their occupations and habits, democratical, and will ever continue so. They must be *outvoted*, or the constitution is lost. The mode in which this must be done is obvious; and it is here that the persevering efforts of property can best overcome the prodigious ascendancy which the Reform Bill, in the outset, gave to the reckless and destitute classes of the community. IT IS IN THE REGISTRATION COURTS THAT THE BATTLE OF THE CONSTITUTION IS TO BE FOUGHT AND WON. It is by a continued, persevering, and skilful exertion there that education, worth, and property may regain their ascendancy over anarchy, vice, and democracy. By a proper organisation in this way, it is astonishing what may be done. It is thus, and thus only, that the balance of society can be restored in these Islands.”—*Blackwood’s Magazine*, 1st May 1835, vol. xxxvii. p. 813. The capitals are in the original, and the author need not be ashamed now to avow his composition. Sir R. Peel’s speeches to the same effect were in 1837 and 1838.

was a “huge appropriation clause”—a phrase which so perfectly expressed the truth that it became a household word in every part of Great Britain. But this very absence of a creative mind, or original thought, only rendered him more powerful and successful as a statesman, whose influence and success in a constitutional monarchy must always be built upon his measures falling in with the opinions, at the moment, of the majority. These opinions are generally formed upon the great of a former generation, not the present; and therefore nothing is, in a popular community, so fatal to the present power of a statesman, whatever it may be to his future fame, as conceiving or acting upon original ideas. But though not gifted with a creative mind, he was second to none in the readiness with which he embraced, the force with which he worked out, and the ability with which he enforced, the arguments of others. His industry was indefatigable, his powers of research vast, and his faculty of bringing an immense mass of facts to bear upon a particular view, unrivalled even in the days of Huskisson. He had a prodigious acquaintance with all the principal branches of our trade and manufactures, and was often able to correct the statements or inform the ignorance of the very persons practically engaged in them. Like most men of a capacity for a powerful mind, he was gifted with a singularly retentive memory, and could bring out at will figures and details on subjects which for long had not been under discussion, to the no small annoyance of his opponents, who were rarely endowed with the same power of commanding details, and bringing them forth on the proper occasion. Hansard’s Debates were familiar to him, and great was the success with which he often turned against his opponents that provoking record of the past. These, if not the highest qualities in a debater, were perhaps the most serviceable in the reformed House of Commons, composed for the most part of practical men who had worked their way to the lead in the large constituencies, and who were

less liable to be influenced by bursts of eloquence or the flowers of rhetoric than by a simple business-like statement of facts connected with, or material to, the leading interests which their constituencies expected them to support.

6. His style of eloquence was of a high, but not of the highest kind. His speeches were always full of matter, his command of figures immense, and the correctness of his statements of facts such that his most inveterate opponent was never able to detect him in an error. He was more successful, however, in stating his own case than in refuting that of his opponents: he seldom met an argument fairly: he rarely tried to refute, often to ridicule his adversary. It was well said of him by an accomplished parliamentary antagonist, that he drove an excellent pair, but rarely put on four horses. He was an accomplished scholar, and was first brought into notice by taking the highest degrees at Oxford both in classics and mathematics. But though he retained through life a strong partiality for the studies of his youth, and often made a happy use of classical allusions and quotations in Parliament, his mind was not sufficiently ardent, his genius not sufficiently glowing, to inspire him with the vehement feelings which are the soul of the highest style of eloquence. "Thoughts that breathe and words that burn" seldom occurred to his calm and practical mind. He was an admirable debater; and, from his thorough command of every subject to which he applied his powers, he never failed to rouse the attention of his hearers, and acquired at length the command, to an extraordinary extent, of the House of Commons. But though always sagacious and weighty in the arguments he adduced, he had none of the earnestness which springs from strong internal conviction, and still less of that, the highest of all, which flows from originality or fire of conception.

7. His name is so indissolubly connected with the two great changes which he was mainly instrumental in effecting, that his merits in an inferior

department of the public service are in a great measure forgotten. But in the domestic administration of the empire his merits were of the very highest kind. As Home Secretary, during the many years he held that important office, his conduct was in the truest sense upright and meritorious. Patient and laborious, conscientious in the conception of duty, and unwearied in its discharge, he was always at his post, and devoted the powers of an active and vigorous mind to the investigation of the numerous matters of public and private interest which were then submitted to his consideration. He took upon himself the duty of both counsel and judge in the melancholy cases, often of convictions for light offences, then unhappily so frequent, when the life of a criminal was referred to the mercy of the Crown and the decision of the Home Secretary. The improvements he introduced into the Irish police were so great that he may be said to have been its founder; and it was under his direction that it became what it now is, one of the finest bodies of men, and beyond all question the finest civil force that exists in the world. The metropolis owes to him the admirable mounted and foot police to which its tranquillity and safety in recent times have been so much indebted. Nor were his exertions confined merely to administrative ameliorations. In the modification of our criminal code he eagerly adopted, and successfully carried into practice, the views of Romilly and Mackintosh; and it is owing to his efforts, in a great degree, that the severity of the penal law has been so much modified that, for above ten years, no man has been executed in Great Britain save for wilful and cold-blooded murder. Happy would it have been if his sagacious and practical mind had been turned with equal earnestness to the great questions of secondary punishments, and the removal of the difficulties with which the practical operation of the only effectual one — transportation — has come to be surrounded!

8. One great and lasting benefit has

the popular branch of the Legislature. It need hardly be said that such a statesman must always be substantially a delegate, which no really great man ever will be.

10. The truth appears to be, that he was throughout, and in all his changes, actuated by a sincere and disinterested desire for the good of his country; but that one unhappy mistake, into which he had been led, in the outset of his career, by his adoption of the views of others, rendered him, on the most momentous occasions, either blind to what that good really was, or timorous in asserting his own views regarding it. Without the advantages of ancient descent or aristocratic connections, and the son of one who had been the architect of his own fortune, he was naturally inclined to regard with favour that mercantile interest to which his greatness had been owing. It would be going too far to assert, as Gibbon did of Mr Fox, that "his inmost soul was tinged with democracy;" for no man was inspired from principle with a more profound respect for the civil institutions of his country. But this was the conviction of reason, it was not the bent of inclination. It is certain that, from early youth, he was inclined to Liberal opinions, and that it was a knowledge of that which induced his father, who was a stanch Tory of the old school, to throw him so early into public life, in hopes that, when in harness, he would wax warm in the contest on his own side.* This tendency, unavoidable in one situated

as he was, was unfortunately greatly increased by his early connection with the rising school of the political economists, whose opinions on the all-important matter of monetary policy had been recorded in the memorable Bullion Report of 1810. The leaders of this school, Mr Horner and Mr Ricardo, obtained on these subjects the entire direction of his mind; and it is to their influence that the parts of his career which otherwise would seem inexplicable are chiefly to be ascribed. For good or for evil, they stamped their impress upon his mind; and his subsequent career bore indelible marks of their influence.

11. He had been nominated chairman of the Bullion Committee of 1819 by Lord Liverpool, to form a check upon the extreme views of Mr Ricardo and the Economists; but he soon was either convinced by their arguments, or fell a prey to their seductions. He disdained lucre for himself or his relations, but he worshipped it with devout devotion for his country. He thought the empire never could be in danger when its monetary state was sound, and that that depended entirely on the retention of gold by the Bank of England. He measured the public strength by the number of sovereigns in its vaults, private influence in a great degree by the magnitude of balances with bankers. In gold he saw the only solid and imperishable condensation of wealth, in realised capital the only secure foundation for future progress or accumulation. He never could believe that the nation was other than prosperous if the Bank had fifteen millions' worth of gold in its coffers. He deemed every attempt to create or augment wealth hazardous and delusive which was not based upon the interest of its moneyed capital, every measure expedient which went to augment the solid metallic treasures of the nation. To that unhappy conviction the most fatal errors of his career may be distinctly traced. He lived in the perpetual dread of the nation being broken down, and public ruin induced, either by the draining away the gold, which would starve in-

* "Une anecdote que je tiens de bonne source donnerait lieu de penser qu'il était, depuis longtemps et par nature, placé sur la pente à laquelle il céda, quand de conservateur obstiné il devint ardent réformateur. On dit qu'en 1809, lorsqu'il entra dans la Chambre des Communes, son père, le vieux Sir R. Peel, alla trouver Lord Liverpool, et lui dit: 'Mon fils est, soyez-en sûr, un jeune homme doué de talens rares, et qui jouera un rôle important. Mais je le connais bien; au fond, ses penchans sont Whigs; si nous ne l'engageons pas promptement dans nos rangs, il nous échappera. Mettez-le dans les affaires; il vous servira bien; mais il faut sans tarder vous emparer de lui.' Lord Liverpool observa le fils, reconnut son mérite, et suivit le conseil du père."—Guizot, *Sir R. Peel*, p. 342.

dustry, or by the issue of assignats to supply their place, which would extinguish capital. The memory of 1825, when the bullion in the Bank was reduced to a million, and public bankruptcy was avoided only by the issue of two millions of old notes; of the dreary years from 1838 to 1842, when suffering met him on every side, and the memory of which, he himself said, "would never be erased from his mind," were perpetually present to his recollection. The cry, "To stop the Duke, go for gold," continually resounded in his ears.

12. When once this key to his political conduct is seized, it affords a satisfactory explanation of his whole political career. He was truly and sincerely patriotic, and actuated on every occasion by nothing but a regard for what he deemed the public good; but he, nevertheless, acted on many in direct opposition to it, from the unhappy delusion under which he laboured in regard to guarding the treasures of the Bank of England. He was courageous, both personally and politically, for himself, but timorous for his country. It is no wonder he was so; for he had placed it on the unstable equilibrium, and any considerable concussion might overturn at once the whole fabric. His practical sagacity led him clearly to see that any serious internal convulsion, and even the most inconsiderable foreign war, might very probably lead to such a run on the Bank as would, in all probability, under the existing monetary system, prove fatal to that establishment, and with it entirely unhinge public credit, and render destitute millions of starving workmen. It was to avert this catastrophe that all his measures were directed. For this it was that he emancipated the Catholics in 1829, to postpone rebellion in Ireland; and surrendered Maine, by the Ashburton capitulation, in 1842, to avoid a rupture with America; and abandoned the Corn Laws, in 1846, to render England the great emporium of corn throughout the world, and thereby prevent the drain for its purchase which so nearly proved fatal to

the Bank in 1839. His monetary bill of 1844 was intended to lay speculation in irons, and so prevent the drain upon the metallic treasures of the nation, which indulgence in it to excess never failed to occasion. That his apprehensions were well founded, the event has decisively proved; the only thing to be wondered at is, that he did not perceive that the danger was entirely of his own creation, by having rendered public credit dependent exclusively on the retention of gold, and that the measures he intended to avert, were [the greatest possible aggravation of, the evil.

13. In private life, Sir Robert's character was altogether unexceptionable. Inheriting from his father, the first baronet, who made the fortune, immense wealth, he made a noble use of it. Simple and unostentatious in his habits, his tastes were refined, and he expended largely in the encouragement of the arts which elevate the mind and purify the taste. A kind and affectionate husband, a liberal father, he never deviated from correctness either in conduct or decorum, and his bitterest political enemies (and no man latterly had more) were unable to find one blot in his escutcheon, so far as domestic relations were concerned. Passionately fond of reading, he stole every hour he could command from public business for his books; and seldom came into the room, when alone, without a volume under his arm. He frequently read aloud passages which struck him to his family, and often read the whole time of breakfast or dinner when there was no company.* He was by nature afflicted with a violent temper, and his fits of anger, when a young man, were so violent that he used, when they came on, to shut himself up alone till the dark fit was over. By degrees, however, he obtained the mastery of this infirmity, and this at length so effectually that he passed with the world, at a distance, as a man of a singularly cold and phlegmatic temperament. He had all the contempt for rank, merely as such, which

* I had these particulars from his gifted daughter, the present Countess of Jersey.

so often accompanies strong intellectual powers; and he showed this, not only through his entire life, but in his injunctions to his family after his death. He declined a seat in the House of Peers in 1835, when offered by William IV.; he respectfully refused the Garter when tendered to him, in 1846, by Queen Victoria; and in his testament he solemnly enjoined his family never to accept honours for his services to his country, whatever they might do for their own. Faithful to his injunctions, Lady Peel, after his death, declined a peerage in her own right, pressed upon her by the Queen. Reserved in his nature, and uncommunicative in his habits, he did not seek to shine in general society, and perhaps was not so well qualified as many inferior men for such displays; but in a select circle of a few, with whom he was intimate, the conversation of no one was more charming. There was a certain *retenue*, however, maintained with those for whom he had the greatest regard; he did not, like Mr Canning, unbosom himself in the most unguarded moments; like Mr Pitt, he had many followers, but few friends.*

14. The resignation of Ministers had been so long foreseen that Sir R. Peel's arrangements were complete before it took place, and the new Cabinet was announced in a few days. It presented a formidable array of talent, as, in addition to nearly all the members of the Duke of Wellington's Ministry, Lord Stanley and Sir James Graham,

* The following charming picture of Sir R. Peel in his family circle at Drayton Manor, is from the hand of no common man, and no ordinary observer:—"Dans l'automne de 1848," says M. Guizot, "je vis Sir Robert Peel au sein de sa famille, et au milieu de la population de ses terres. Lady Peel, encore belle, passionnément et modestement dévouée à son mari; une fille charmante, mariée depuis à un fils de Lord Camoys; trois des fils de Sir Robert, l'un capitaine de vaisseau, déjà renommé par le plus brillant courage; l'autre, qui venait de débiter avec succès dans la Chambre des Communes; le troisième encore livré à ses études. Sur les domaines, de nombreux et heureux fermiers, parmi lesquels un des frères de Sir Robert, qui avait préféré la vie agricole à toute autre carrière; de grands travaux d'amélioration rurale, surtout de drainage, que Sir Robert suivait de

who had receded from the ranks of the Whigs, were included in it. Sir R. Peel, of course, was First Lord of the Treasury; the Duke of Wellington had, at his desire, a seat in the Cabinet without any office, save that of Commander-in-Chief, attached to it. Lord Lyndhurst resumed his seat on the Woolsack. Mr Goulburn was Chancellor of the Exchequer. Sir James Graham was Home Secretary; the Earl of Aberdeen, Foreign; and Lord Stanley, Colonial. Lord Haddington was First Lord of the Admiralty; and Lord Ellenborough, President of the Board of Control. The Cabinet exhibited, upon the whole, a splendid array of talent, and, what was of more importance to the country, an adequate intermixture of business habits and practical acquaintance with affairs; although many doubted whether each was in his proper place, and whether a transposition might not be made with benefit to the public service. In particular, Mr Goulburn seemed hardly adequate to the arduous duties of Chancellor of the Exchequer; and Lord Stanley, notwithstanding his great abilities, was not peculiarly versed in colonial affairs. But so great was the ascendancy of Sir R. Peel over his colleagues, that it was trusted his master mind would pervade every department. No difficulty was now experienced with the Ladies of the Household. The Queen, yielding to her own matured sense, and the necessities of a constitutional monarchy, parted in silence and sorrow

près, et nous démontrait avec une connaissance précise des détails. Belle existence domestique, grande, simple, bien ordonnée avec largeur; dans l'intérieur de la maison une gravité affectueuse, moins animée, moins expansive, moins douce que ne le désirent et ne le comportent nos mœurs; les souvenirs politiques consacrés par une galerie des portraits, la plupart contemporains, soit les collègues de Sir Robert dans le Gouvernement, soit les hommes distingués avec lesquels il avait eu des relations. Hors de la maison, entre le propriétaire et la population environnante, une grande distance, marquée dans les manières, mais comblée par des rapports fréquents, pleins d'équité et de bienveillance de la part de supérieurs sans apparence d'envie ni de servilité chez les inférieurs."—Guizot, *Sir Robert Peel*, pp. 317, 318.

13th July 1841 had acquired the absolute command of Turkey by the recognition by the European Powers of the exclusion of all ships of war, except those of Russia and Turkey, from the Black Sea, had come to the very verge of a war with Great Britain in consequence of the siege of Herat, and the struggle for the central mountains of Affghanistan. France, whose alliance with England had for the last ten years mainly contributed to the peace of Europe, had been alienated, to all appearance, beyond redemption by the settlement of the Eastern question without her intervention, and the defiance to her arms by the bombardment of Beyrout and Acre. Upon Spain, distracted by a savage and relentless civil war but recently extinguished, no reliance whatever could be placed; and the Liberal Government of Portugal was only upheld by the constant presence of a British fleet in the Tagus. Austria, though united with England on the Eastern question, and a party to the attack on Acre, was too nervous about the popular tendencies of the British Government, and the frightful civil war it had kept alive in the Peninsula, not to keep aloof on questions of general politics. The rebellion in Canada had been only recently suppressed, and a large force was still required to restrain its angry spirits; the West India colonies, steeped in ruin from the effects of negro emancipation, were only restrained by absolute impotence from breaking into open revolt; the Cape of Good Hope was threatened by the ceaseless hostility of the Caffres, and almost stripped of the doubtful support of the Boors; and India, involved in a perilous distant warfare in the mountains of Affghanistan, was on the verge of the greatest military disaster recorded in British annals. To complete the whole, England had got involved in a serious war with the Chinese Empire, carried on at an immense distance and at an enormous expense, in which ultimate success was doubtful, and present cost certain; and which, in the most favourable view, promised no successful results but at

a vast expenditure of blood and treasure.

16. Fearfully as the horizon was overcast in every direction in external relations, the prospect was still more alarming in internal affairs; and in truth it was the national weakness at home which rendered so formidable the dangers which threatened the State abroad. Five bad seasons in succession had nearly doubled the price of food, and augmented immensely the annual importation from abroad. The price of wheat during the whole year had been above 62s., in August it was 72s., the quarter, and this high rate had been maintained for five years—a woeful change for the working classes from 39s. to 40s., at which it had stood before the commencement of this disastrous epoch. The pressure of high prices was not alleviated to the manufacturing classes by proportionally high wages; on the contrary, this period of distress had this peculiar and unprecedented feature, that high prices of provisions of all sorts were accompanied by ruinously low wages, especially in every branch of manufacturing industry. Power-loom weavers and coomers, who ten years before had been making 18s. a-week, could now only make 6s., and that by the most exhausting and incessant toil. Colliers and iron-miners, who four years before had earned 5s. a-day, were now at 2s. 6d., while wheat was nearly doubled in price; and weavers by the hand-loom could with difficulty make 3d. a-day. A hopeless paralysis seemed to have fallen upon the enterprise and activity of the country; the depression was universal and extreme, and continued without abatement during the whole of 1842 and the first half of 1843. The winters 1841-2 and 1842-3 were the most melancholy ever known in English history; and the only comforting feature in the case was the noble patience and resignation with which their sufferings were borne by the poor. Yet such was their intensity that the only surprising thing is how a great proportion of them contrived to prolong existence at all during such a terrible and protracted pe-

riod of suffering. The distress was so universal that it had ceased to be matter of dispute; the deplorable fact was felt and lamented in silence. In proroguing Parliament, after a short session of a few weeks, subsequent to Sir R. Peel's accession to power, the Royal Commission said: "Her Majesty has commanded us to express her deep concern for the distress which has prevailed for a considerable period in some of the principal manufacturing districts, and to assure you that you may rely upon her cordial concurrence in all measures which, after mature consideration, may be taken to prevent the recurrence of that distress."

17. This universal commercial and manufacturing suffering produced the results that might have been expected on the revenue, trade, and resources of the country. The national income declined £1,200,000 from 1841 to

1842; while the current expenses were simultaneously increased by a similar amount, leaving a deficiency of £2,500,000, which had to be made up by loan.* The exports and imports of the nation exhibited a similar and still more alarming change: † the former had *sunk* from £53,000,000 in 1839 to £47,000,000 in 1842; the latter *increased* from £62,000,000 in 1839 to £70,000,000 in 1843; a large portion of this balance, of course, having to be paid in gold or silver, to the entire destruction, under the existing monetary system, of all credit and commercial industry in the country. It was easy to see to what this large and increasing balance of imports over exports was owing. It arose from the great importation of grain during these years, ‡ in consequence of the continued unfavourable harvests and high prices, which had swelled from nothing at all

* INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.

Years.	Income.	Expenditure besides Public Debt.	Interest of Debt.
1840	£47,567,565	£19,779,818	£29,381,718
1841	48,084,360	20,785,584	29,490,145
1842	46,965,631	21,517,049	29,428,120

—PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, 475, 3d edit.

† EXPORTS AND IMPORTS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

Years.	British and Irish Exports—declared value.	Imports—official value.	Excess of Imports.
1839	£53,233,590	£62,004,000	£8,770,420
1840	51,406,430	67,432,964	16,026,534
1841	51,634,623	64,877,962	12,743,339
1842	47,381,023	65,204,729	17,823,706
1843	52,278,449	70,093,353	17,814,904

—PORTER, 356, 3d edit.

At this period the real or declared value of imports was not returned; but when that began to be done in 1854, it appeared that the real value of imports was much greater than the official, so that the balance of imports over exports was more considerable than here appears.—See note to chap. xix. sec. 67, at vol. iii. p. 254.

‡ IMPORTS OF WHEAT INTO GREAT BRITAIN FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

Years.	Quarters.	Price per Qr.	Years.	Quarters.	Price per Qr.
1834	64,653	46s. 2d.	1840	2,389,732	66s. 4d.
1835	28,488	39s. 4d.	1841	2,619,702	64s. 4d.
1836	24,826	46s. 6d.	1842	2,977,302	57s. 3d.
1837	244,087	55s. 10d.	1843	962,287	50s. 1d.
1838	1,854,452	64s. 7d.	1844	1,021,681	51s. 8d.
1839	2,590,734	70s. 8d.			

—PORTER, 140, 143.

in 1835 and 1836, to 3,000,000 quarters in 1842. This great import of grain cost the nation, almost all in gold and silver—wheat being on an average at 64s.—no less than £10,000,000 sterling in one year. This state of things was sufficiently calamitous in itself; but when its effect upon the currency, and through it on the whole credit and industry of the country, is taken into view, the effect became beyond measure disastrous. The gold and silver held by the Bank of England, which in April 1838 had been above £10,000,000, had sunk on 15th October 1839 to £2,522,000, and even in February 1842 had only risen to £5,600,000. As a necessary consequence of which, the notes of the Bank in circulation, which in August 1818 had been £26,202,150, with a population little more than half, and transactions not a third of the present, and in 1835 and 1836 had been £18,085,000 and £18,018,000 respectively, had sunk in the end of 1839 to £16,732,000, and in February 1842 to £17,500,000. Whoever will consider these figures with attention, will at once perceive what was the cause of the universal distress, and how, under the existing monetary system, five

bad seasons in succession had come to tell with decisive and ruinous effect upon the whole commercial and manufacturing interests of the country. Nor will it appear surprising that, in England and Wales alone, the paupers had risen in the latter year to 1,427,000, of whom 85,000 were able-bodied, the first figure being about an eleventh of the entire population.*

18. When such was the state of the country, it was next to impossible to see where an increase of revenue was to be looked for, or even how the existing annual deficit of £2,500,000 was to be filled up. Yet was it absolutely necessary to make a great effort in finance, and that without delay, for this deficit, large as it was, promised to be doubled in the ensuing year by the enormous expenses of the Afghanistan expedition, which had already cost £10,000,000, and left a deficit of £2,500,000 on the Indian revenue, which could only be made up from the exchequer of Great Britain. Add to this, that not only had France been irritated in the highest degree by the course pursued by England in the Levant, but a new cause of discord, to be immediately noticed, had sprung up about Otaheite and its

PAUPERS RELIEVED IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

Years.	Paupers.	Of whom able bodied.
1840,	1,199,529	..
1841,	1,299,048	..
1842,	1,427,187	85,171
1843,	1,539,490	99,196

—PORTER, p. 94.

The following official table exhibits a melancholy picture of the effect of this long-continued distress upon the duration and chances of life, especially in manufacturing and mining districts, where the chances of life are, under the most favourable circumstances, so precarious:—

DIED OUT OF 10,000 PERSONS BORN IN—

	Died under 5.	Died under 20.	Died under 40.	Lived above 40.
Rutlandshire,	2865	3756	5081	4969
London,	3805	4580	6111	3869
Bradford,	4687	5896	7061	2939
Macclesfield,	4462	5889	7300	2700
Wigan,	4790	5911	7117	2883
Preston,	4947	6083	7462	2538
Bury,	4864	6017	7819	2601
Stockport,	4879	6005	7367	2633
Bolton,	4939	6113	7459	2541
Leeds,	5286	6218	7441	2559
Holbeck,	5090	6133	7337	2663

The immense proportion of deaths in the manufacturing districts under five years of age, being from 47 to 51 per cent in them all, and about double of those in the rural under the same age, is particularly remarkable, and apparently points to some fixed law of nature.—See the Table in *Parl. Deb.*, lix. 687, Sept. 28, 1841; and DOUBLEDAY, li. 330.

sable Queen, Pomare, which threatened still further to embroil the two nations. Incessant demands were daily made on the Government for additional troops, both from the colonies and the manufacturing districts of Great Britain; but yet the national forces were only 92,000, exclusive of India, of whom more than a half were absorbed by the colonies. And as the disturbed state of Ireland required more than a half of the 45,000 left in the British Islands to be permanently stationed in that country, the force in England was so much reduced, that we have the authority of the late Lord Hardinge for the assertion, that when he came into office in 1841, if an invasion from France had taken place, he could not have collected, after garrisoning the sea fortresses, more than 10,000 men and 42 guns to defend London, and the carriages of the greater part of the latter were so crazy, that if taken into a wet clay field they would have gone to pieces.* At this period Louis Philippe had 300,000 regular soldiers disposable in France; and while England had only ten ships of the line afloat in the Mediterranean, France had seventeen.

19. As might naturally have been expected, this long-continued and poignant suffering produced at length serious disturbances, which broke out in the manufacturing districts. Indeed, the amount of distress ascertained to exist by the Committee of Inquiry, appointed by the Ministry in the autumn of 1841, was such, that the only surprising thing was, how a universal disruption of society did not take place. In Carlisle, one-fourth of the inhabitants were found to be in a state bordering on starvation. In Stockport above half the master-spinners had failed, 3000 houses were shut up and uninhabited, and 5000 persons were walking the streets in a state of idleness. At Leeds the heap of stones broken by the paupers had swelled to 150,000 tons, when all the workmen employed on it were taken into the

* The Author had this from Lord Hardinge's own lips, and he made the same statement afterwards in Parliament.

workhouse. In Manchester the sale of new clothes for the poorer classes had almost entirely ceased; nothing could find a market among them but shirts, and patches to mend the old garments. The condition of the shopkeepers, especially of the humbler class, was scarcely less distressing, while poor-rates were daily increasing beyond all precedent; their trade had sunk to a third, often not more than a tenth, of what it had been five years before. In Dorsetshire, the wages of an able-bodied labourer were only 4s. a-week, and the best could not earn more than 6s., and this with wheat at 70s. the quarter. In a word, the condition of the labouring poor in all the manufacturing districts was such that it could not by possibility become worse without multitudes being swept by absolute famine into an untimely grave.

20. With all the magnanimous patience and long-suffering of the working classes, it could not be expected that this universal distress in the manufacturing districts could continue for any great length of time without producing acts of insubordination and violence; and owing to the small military force in the country, they were of such a kind as to excite the most serious apprehension in the Government. The pitmen in the coal districts, and the miners in the iron, were particularly riotous; for their wages, though much reduced, were *not so low as to preclude effort*, and they fell under the guidance of delegates and itinerant orators, who arrayed them in trades-unions, the usual sad termination at this period of general distress, in order, by force and violence, to arrest the fall of wages. At Dudley, Stourbridge, Merthyr-Tydvil, and several other places in South Wales, there were serious riots requiring the interposition of the military. In the Potteries, a body of six thousand men collected together, and kept Staffordshire for long in a continual state of anxiety and alarm. In Manchester and its vicinity the influx of rioters became so great in August 1842, that it evidently proceeded from some common design, and the whole troops

which London could spare, including a regiment of the Guards, were despatched, at two hours' notice, by railway to the scene of danger. Even after their arrival, the forces of the insurgents were so large that it appeared at one time as if the whole of Lancashire was in their possession. Mills were stopped, machinery destroyed, windows smashed, and threatening letters sent in every direction. Three rioters were shot dead by the military at Barslcm, and several wounded. Lady Peel received an anonymous letter which intimated that on a certain night Sir Robert's splendid seat, Drayton Manor, would be burned down. She had the courage to remain after procuring a guard, and the threatened attack was not made. It was fully ascertained that these violent acts were organised and directed by the Chartists, and a sense of this, joined to the presence of a large military force collected from all quarters in the district, at length restored a forced tranquillity.

21. In Scotland matters assumed a still more formidable aspect; for the people there, slow to move, and not readily excited, are tenacious of purpose, and, when once fairly roused, are capable of the most desperate acts. There is a certain amount of distress which so paralyses the mind as to render disturbance impossible; there is another which inflames it. Paisley, in Renfrewshire, in August 1842, had attained the former stage; for there were seventeen thousand persons out of employment, or working for 2½d. a-day; but so sunk were their spirits, that they remained quiet, and even recruiting for the army ceased. In Lanarkshire the case was different; the colliers' and iron-miners' wages had sunk from 5s. to 2s. 9d. or 2s. 6d. a-day; but even the reduced sum was capable not only of supporting life, but maintaining vigour. The consequence was, that a great strike took place of the colliers and iron-miners in that county, in the first week of August 1842, for an advance of wages, which soon came to embrace fifteen thousand persons. The men on strike

openly declared that they were not going to starve when the land was covered with food; that there were potatoes enough in the fields, and corn in the barnyards; and that they would help themselves. They were as good as their word. Dividing themselves into detachments of a hundred or a hundred and fifty each, armed with muskets and clubs, they entered at night into all the most tempting fields of potatoes or barnyards of corn, and forcibly carried off the produce before the eyes of the trembling proprietors. So general did this species of depredation become, that every field or yard where provisions were to be found in the mineral districts of the country, required to be guarded at night by armed men, as is the case in the worst-ordered parts of the East; and the whole night long a continued roll of firearms was to be heard in these districts, proceeding either from the guards firing to intimidate the depredators, or the latter to enforce their iniquitous designs. To complete the public danger, the only regular regiment in that part of the country was drawn away, at the very worst of the disturbance, to form an escort for the Queen in her progress from Dundee to Blair-Atholl, where her Majesty was to pass the autumn; and the barracks in Glasgow, containing a considerable depot of arms, were left under the charge of a dismounted body of eighteen invalid troopers, of whom only *five* were fit for duty.

22. The great thing, in the first instance, was to prevent this extraordinary state of things from coming to the knowledge of the insurgents in the mining districts, who would instantly have taken advantage of it. For this purpose orders were given by the Sheriff to have the barrack-gates open, and to parade the few invalids in an ostentatious manner during the day in the yard, but to have everything ready to repel an assault at night. By these means the absence of the main body was never discovered till after they had returned; but even when they had done so, and a few troops of horse and companies of infantry were sta-

tioned in the disturbed mineral districts, it was no easy matter to know how to make head against the systematic depredation which, over a space of fifteen miles square, was going forward. So perfect was the system of espionage established, that wherever the military went with any of the county magistrates during the night, everything was quiet, and not a vestige of disorder was to be seen; but meanwhile the distant report of firearms, which lasted as long as it was dark, proved that it had commenced or was apprehended in other quarters where there were no means of resistance; and reports of half-a-dozen burglaries or forcible invasion of fields were received next morning. At length it was stopped in a very singular way. The Sheriff of Lanarkshire issued a proclamation, recommending no resistance to the bodies of armed men which invaded the farmers' premises, but enjoining the people to watch the retiring body at a distance, and send information to him of the place they had gone to with their spoil; and next night he surrounded the village with a troop of yeomanry, who turned out with the greatest alacrity on the occasion, searched every house, and carried off all the men of those houses in which suspected articles were found, for judicial examination.

23. This system, vigorously applied in several instances, let the insurgents see they might lose more than they gained by their nocturnal depredations, and they generally ceased. But the colliers continued the strike with dogged resolution the whole winter, and it terminated only in March 1843 from sheer exhaustion, and when the men were compelled to accept lower wages than their employers had originally offered. This strike lasted seven months, kept at least fifty thousand persons all that time in a state of privation of the severest kind, doubled while it lasted the price of coal, and cost the nation at least £600,000. Such was the exasperation of the miners during its continuance, that on one occasion, when the military had been imprudently withdrawn from Airdrie,

the centre of the mining district, by the military authorities, a mob of three thousand persons got up in an hour, shut up the police, twenty in number, in a house, and set fire to the building; and it was only from the accidental circumstance of the hay ignited and thrust in to the aid of the conflagration being damp, from the first shower which had fallen for two months, that the whole police, with five prisoners whom they had in custody, were not burned alive.*

24. This universal distress in the manufacturing and mining districts complicated in a very serious degree Sir R. Peel's position, and may be regarded as one of the chief causes of the split in his party which so soon after took place. The Anti-Corn-Law League made a skilful use of the general suffering, and turned it to admirable account in their assault on the ancient protective system of the country. They constantly held it forth as having arisen entirely from the monopoly of agricultural produce which the landlords enjoyed, which prevented other nations from being enriched by the sale to us of their grain, and thereby disabled them from purchasing in return any considerable amount of our manufactures. In proof of this, they triumphantly referred to the opposite condition of the manufacturing and agricultural interests in the country, the former of which was involved in universal and deep distress, while the latter was enjoying comparative affluence, with produce of all kinds at nearly double the price they had brought some years before. It must be confessed that the argument and reference were plausible in the highest degree, insomuch that not only the ignorant multitude, who were actuated merely by a sense of suffering, but many sensible and thoughtful persons, began to embrace the opinion that the real cause of the long-continued commercial distress had at last been discovered, and that there

* The Author, suddenly sent for in the night, from his residence fifteen miles distant, arrived with the military at two in the following morning, and arrested the delinquent leaders, who were transported at the next assizes.

was no chance of its being removed until an entire freedom in the commerce of grain was established.

25. The anti-Corn-Law orators used arguments directly opposite to each other, according as they addressed agricultural or manufacturing assemblages; and yet, strange to say, they were readily listened to by both those opposite parties. To the master manufacturers they held forth that the reduction which Free Trade would immediately make in the price of grain would necessarily draw after it a corresponding fall in the wages of labour, and thus enable them to regain the foreign markets which had of late been visibly slipping from their hands. The master manufacturers all believed this, and it was this conviction which rendered them such strenuous supporters of the anti-Corn-Law agitation. To the operative workmen they affirmed that the stimulus the change would give to trade would be such as to cause their wages to rise instead of falling with the decline in the price of provisions, and that by supporting the League they would realise what had been promised them by the Reform Bill, but never yet obtained—namely, a duplication of wages and halving of the cost of food. To the landlords and farmers they held out the prospect of such a reduction in the price of manufactured articles of all sorts, and such an increased consumption of grain from the universal prosperity, as would more than compensate the fall in its price. Strange to say, these opposite and contradictory views were alike embraced by the respective audiences to which they were addressed; the wish, in every instance, being the father to the thought, and preparing a willing reception of such arguments as promised a relief by the change to the suffering under which they almost all laboured. And yet was that suffering in reality owing to entirely different causes from what either party imagined, and certain to be dreadfully aggravated, instead of being removed, by the remedies proposed for its alleviation. It arose from five bad seasons in succession acting upon a monetary system rendered

entirely dependent on the retention of gold, which the great importation of grain paid for in specie rendered it impossible to retain; coupled with the serious diminution of the export trade to America, which, in consequence of General Jackson's democratic crusade against the banks in the United States in 1837, had sunk *from twelve to three millions and a half a-year*.* As such, the promised free trade in grain, and consequent increase of the export drain of gold in adverse seasons, could not fail to be the greatest possible aggravation of the danger to the mercantile classes, and so the nation was too fatally taught in the years 1847 and 1848. But no one then anticipated these dangers; and meanwhile the great influence on public opinion which the Anti-Corn-Law League had obtained, augmented seriously the difficulties of Sir R. Peel's position, for he could not by possibility please both sections of his supporters, nor secure the aid of the urban without alienating the county constituencies.

26. Parliament adjourned, after a short session, on 7th October 1841. The only step of importance taken during its continuance was the addition of £3,000,000 to the National Debt, in the form of a loan to meet the deficiency of the year, and the certain deficit of the next, before any new measures of finance could be adopted. Ministers claimed the leisure of the recess, which was little more than three months, to prepare their measures to meet the crisis which had arisen. It was no easy matter to do so, for they had to close a deficit which for four years had been eating like a cancer into the vitals of the State, by raising an increased revenue out of a suffering

* BRITISH MANUFACTURES EXPORTED TO
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA—
DECLARED VALUE.

1835,	£10,568,455
1836,	12,425,605
1837,	4,695,225
1838,	7,585,710
1839,	8,895,204
1840,	5,283,020
1841,	7,095,642
1842,	8,528,807
1843,	5,013,514

—PORTER, p. 860, 8d edit.

and starving people. The attempt, however, was made, and in a courageous spirit; and the remainder of this work is little more than an exposition, so far as the domestic history of England is concerned, of the consequences of the measures adopted for its furtherance. From this time down to the fall of Sebastopol, the annals of its internal legislation, instead of a confused and complicated tissue of abortive or contradictory measures which no art can render interesting, and which the historian himself has great difficulty in understanding, exhibit a steady and consistent system, which, for good or for evil, produced durable and important results, and which must for ever command the attention of mankind, from the immense consequences in both hemispheres with which it was attended.

27. Parliament met on the 3d February 1842; and the anxiety of the nation was wound up to the very highest pitch as to the remedial measures which were to be proposed. It was generally understood, from the character of the Prime Minister and the great strength of his Government, that they would be of a sweeping and decisive character; and the agricultural party had already taken the alarm in consequence of the retirement, in the middle of January, of the Duke of Buckingham from the Cabinet and office of Lord Privy Seal, who was succeeded by the Duke of Buccleuch. As he was the uncompromising friend of the landed interest, his withdrawing from the Cabinet was justly regarded as of ominous import to that portion of the community. The session was opened with unusual splendour, as well from the great concourse of members whom the importance of the measures to be submitted to their consideration had attracted, as from the presence of the King of Prussia, who had come to England to stand sponsor for the Prince of Wales, and who was present with her Majesty on the occasion. The joyous event of the birth of an heir to the throne had taken place on the 9th November preceding. The Queen's

Speech noticed with deep regret the continued distress in the manufacturing districts of the country, bore testimony to the exemplary patience and fortitude with which it had been borne, and recommended to the consideration of the House "the state of the laws which affect the importation of corn, and of other articles, the produce of foreign countries." The Address was carried in both Houses without a division; the attention of all parties, and of the whole country, being fixed on the remedial measures expected from Sir R. Peel with a degree of intensity which never had been witnessed on any former occasion.

28. The eventful debate came on on the 9th February, in a very crowded House, surrounded by a still greater multitude around the doors, which saluted the members as they passed with loud cheers or groans according as they were understood to favour or oppose the removal of the duties on grain. Cries of "No Sliding Scale!" "Total Repeal!" "Fixed Duty!" were heard on all sides. Corn at the moment was 62s. 9d. the quarter, and they fully expected by the measures in preparation it would in a few weeks be at 45s. Below the bar were the Duke of Cambridge and numerous members of the Upper House. Six hundred anti-Corn-Law delegates marched down to the House, and on being refused admission to the lobby, thronged the doors, and added to the general excitement. Already, since the meeting of Parliament, 994 petitions had been presented for the total repeal of the Corn Laws. Sir R. Peel looked grave; he listened unmoved to the cries for the entire removal of the obnoxious duty. At length, amidst breathless silence, he rose and said in substance: "The distress which every one sees and laments, and which has now continued for five years, may be ascribed to the establishment of joint-stock banks, and the connection subsisting between them and our manufacturing establishments, and the consequent immigration of labourers from the agricultural to the manufacturing and mining districts; the immense

building speculations which have recently been going on; the great increase of mechanical power; the reaction of the monetary crisis in the United States, and the consequent diminution of the demand for our manufactures: from thence the interruption of our commerce with China, and the apprehension, which has hardly yet subsided, of the renewal of a general war in Europe. Extend as you will your foreign commerce, you may depend upon it that it is not a necessary consequence that the means of employment for manual labour will be proportionally augmented. While I admit the existence of commercial distress, while I deplore the suffering it has occasioned, I feel bound to declare that I cannot attribute the distress to the extent to which by some it is supposed to be imputable to the Corn Laws.

29. "The export of our manufactures has fallen off considerably in the last two years; their declared value in 1840 fell short of 1839 by £1,817,000. This has chiefly been owing to the great diminution of exports to the United States, which in 1839 were £8,839,000, and had fallen in 1840 to £5,283,000.* This is no doubt a very serious defalcation; but it is fortunate that it is in course of being compensated, and more than compensated, by the great increase in the exports to our own colonies. In 1837 they were £11,208,000; in 1840 they had risen to £15,497,000, and they are still in a course of progressive increase.† The state of our trade with the principal countries of Europe is equally decisive against the idea that the depression which exists is to be

* In 1842, the year in which Sir Robert Peel was speaking, the exports of Great Britain to the United States were only £3,500,000, while six years before they had been £12,500,000.

† EXPORTS TO OUR COLONIES—DECLARED
VALUE.

1837,	£11,208,000
1838,	12,025,000
1839,	14,863,000
1840,	15,497,000

—SIR ROBERT PEEL'S Speech, *Parl. Deb.* ix. 207.

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ascribed to the operation of the Corn Laws. Our exports to Germany, Holland, and Belgium, so far from having declined when these laws were in operation, have, on the contrary, steadily increased. The exports to these three countries in 1837 were £8,742,000; in 1838, £9,606,000; in 1839, £9,660,000; in 1840, £9,704,000; so that, even with respect to those countries from whom we derive our chief supplies of grain when we stand in need of it, which are supposed to be such formidable competitors in manufactures, and from which the demand for British manufactures is said to be rapidly diminishing on account of our exclusion of their produce, it still appears that there has been, on the whole, a progressive increase in the amount of our commerce carried on with them. I cannot therefore infer that the operation of the Corn Laws is to be charged with the depression which is at present so severely felt in many branches of trade. I see other causes in operation which are sufficient in a great degree to account for the evils which no one can deny to exist.

30. "Those who argue against the continuance of the Corn Laws are enabled to appeal to arguments which give them a very great advantage. They urge that they impose a tax upon bread, upon the subsistence of the people, and that this burden is imposed for the benefit of a peculiar class. It is easy to see what impression an argument of this sort is calculated to make, especially upon those who suppose they are suffering under the system complained of. A comparison is often made also between the price of corn in this and other countries where it is grown cheaper, and the inference is immediately drawn, that if the people of this country were put on the same footing with respect to the articles of subsistence, they would be benefited by the whole amount of the effected reduction in price. It appears to me that any conclusion founded upon such a position will be altogether erroneous. The question is, whether you will improve

the condition of the labouring classes by effecting a reduction in the price of their food? No position can be more unfounded. The true question is, not what is the price of food, but what is the command which existing wages give the labouring classes over all that constitutes the enjoyments of life, whether they be necessaries or luxuries? Judging by this standard, the labouring classes in Great Britain have no reason to envy those of any other country. There is no greater error than to suppose that a great reduction in the price of various articles, and particularly of food, must necessarily lead to a great increase in the comforts and enjoyments of the labouring classes in this country.

31. "So far from this being the case, the fact appears to be directly the reverse. Generally speaking, wherever food is very low-priced, the condition of the labouring poor is miserable. I will begin with Prussia. I admit that meat is dearer in this country, that corn is dearer, that all the great articles of human sustenance are much dearer here than in Prussia. But what then? Are the people better off in Prussia than in this country? Do they enjoy and have at their command a greater share of the necessaries and conveniences of life? So far from doing so, it appears from the evidence collected by Dr Bowring, and referred to in the Report of the Committee for the Revision of the Import Duties, that while each individual in England consumes, on an average, a quarter of wheat a-year, in Prussia the consumption is only a barrel, or an eighth part as much, the difference being made up of rye, a very inferior grain. Then as to sugar, the average consumption in Britain is seventeen pounds a-head; in France it is only five pounds a-head; in the states of the German League, four pounds; in Europe generally, two and a half pounds. It is calculated that the people of this country consume fifty pounds of meat annually, at the very lowest. Some writers say one hundred pounds; but take it at the lowest figure, it is much more than they consume in Prussia, which

is only thirty-five pounds. Examples of this sort, to which many others may be added in regard to tea, coffee, tobacco, butter, and other articles of general consumption from every country in Europe, prove how fallacious the idea is, that a low price of provisions is an evidence of general prosperity and wellbeing. On the contrary, it is generally the reverse. A low price of provisions is an indication of a small demand for the better sorts of them, owing to a still lower price of labour.

32. "In arriving at a just and safe conclusion on this subject, it is most important to determine, if possible, whether, in ordinary years, this country is able to supply itself with the necessary amount of provisions. I am by no means prepared to admit that it is not. If, indeed, we were to form our opinion from the last four years, I should be compelled to conclude that we were dependent for a large portion of our annual supply on foreign nations, for our average annual importation of foreign corn into this country, during that period, has been 2,300,000 quarters. But they were all uncommonly bad seasons. If we go back for a longer period, one of twelve or thirteen years, it will be found that the whole did not amount to more than twelve or thirteen millions of quarters; for from July 5, 1828, to July 5, 1841, the whole wheat and wheaten flour imported was just 13,470,000 quarters, being somewhat less than a million of quarters a-year. For six years, from 1830 to 1836, the importation of foreign wheat was almost nothing. The conclusion to be drawn from this is, that there is no ground for supposing that the country, in ordinary seasons, is not capable of supporting itself from its own resources, and that to look for any rapid or great change in the condition of the working classes from any extensive change of the Corn Laws, would subject you to great disappointment. My firm belief is—I am now speaking with reference to those who wish for an absolute repeal of those laws—that if the House of Commons should be induced

to pledge itself to a total repeal, which *we on this side of the House deprecate so much*, you will, without permanently relieving the manufacturing, super-add to it the severest agricultural distress.

33. "With respect to those who advocate a fixed instead of a variable duty on corn, it must be recollected, that whatever odium attaches to the imposition of a variable duty must equally apply to a fixed. Both proceed on the principle that agriculture requires protection, and both must in the end be defended by the same arguments. If I had been of opinion that a fixed duty was preferable to a variable one, I should not have hesitated to propose a fixed duty for the adoption of this House. But I do not see how a fixed duty could either be maintained in periods of scarcity, or how, if maintained, it could be a sufficient protection for our agriculturists. You cannot expect in bad seasons to be independent of foreign supply, but I retain the opinion which I expressed some time ago, that it is *of the utmost importance to the interests of this country that you should be as much as possible independent of foreign supply*. By this I do not mean that you should be in a state of absolute independence, for that perhaps is impossible, but that we should be in that state, that if we resort to foreign nations for supplies, those supplies should be for the purpose of making up deficiencies, rather than as the chief sources of subsistence. I cannot bring myself to the conclusion that there must be a periodical, or even an annual, importation of foreign corn, in order to provide for the wants of the people of this country. Therefore I think that a variable or sliding scale, as it is called, is required, for it alone can meet the cases alike of abundant harvests, when importation might be injurious at one time, and deficient harvests, which might render it indispensable at another. It is by this means that you are most likely to realise the great desideratum in political science—that of an abundant supply with a steady remunerating

price. I should say that for the interests of agriculture it would be desirable that the price of corn should if possible be made to vary between 54s. and 58s. The average of the last ten years is 56s. 11d.; and I do not think that it is for the interests of agriculture that it should be higher, nor do I see any lasting advantage to manufactures from its being lower."

34. The Ministerial plan consisted in the adoption of a new sliding-scale, considerably lower than the former, but still calculated to afford a considerable protection to agriculture. At 50s., and under 51s., the duty on wheat was to be 20s., and from that point it was to fall 1s. with every 1s. the price rose till it reached 73s., when it was to be 1s. only, and remain fixed at that amount above that point. On barley, the duty at 25s. the quarter was to be 11s., falling with every 1s. rise in the price to 37s., when it was to be 1s. only. On oats at 18s. the quarter the duty was to be 8s., falling with every 1s. rise in the price till it reached 27s., when it was to be 1s. only. It was part of Sir R. Peel's plan that this reduction on the duties levied on foreign grain should go hand-in-hand with a proportional reduction in the duties on nearly all other articles of import—in particular, live animals, meat, and almost all kinds of manufactured articles; but the paramount importance of the proposed alteration on the Corn Laws led to the debate and sense of the House being taken first on them alone.

35. On the other hand, it was contended by Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston: "It is now a fixed principle of political philosophy, that the best way to regulate commercial matters is not to legislate at all on the subject, but to leave the seller or producer, and the purchaser, to adjust their respective interests as they themselves may incline. Corn is no exception to this rule. The principle of buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest, is not less applicable to that than to other objects of commerce. Adam Smith, it is true, states, as an exception to this princi-

ple, the case of a number of persons having been long engaged in a particular branch of manufacture, in which case humanity may require that the freedom of trade should only be restored by slow gradations. Mr Malthus, too, another great authority, admits that corn is an exception, as you ought as far as possible to render the country independent of foreign states for its food. But there seems to be no solid foundation for the latter exception. We are not, we cannot be independent of foreign nations, any more than they can of us. It is admitted that, for the last four years, 2,300,000 quarters of foreign corn have been imported; that is to say, two millions of our people have been dependent on foreign countries for their daily food. At least five millions of our people are dependent on the supplies of cotton from America, of foreign wool, or foreign silk. Independence of other countries, therefore, is a chimera which it is in vain for a great commercial nation to pursue; and even were it reached, it would be attended with no visible benefit. It is impossible that the time should ever arise when you might not find some part of the world from which you might derive your supplies. The true independence of a great commercial nation is to be found, not in raising all the produce it requires within its own bounds, but in attaining such a pre-eminence in commerce that the time can never arise when other nations will not be compelled, for their own sakes, to minister to its wants.

36. "The duties proposed to be levied by the new scale are in the highest degree prohibitory. Twenty shillings are to be levied on wheat when the price is 51s. Now it appears from the consular returns, that the usual price of wheat free on board at Dantzic is 40s., to which, if 10s. 6d. be added for the price of the transit, we have 50s. 6d. as the price at which Dantzic wheat can be sold in this country. If to this you add 20s. duty, you raise the price of imported wheat at once to 70s., a price at which it never can be imported with profit, unless prices have reached famine levels.

Indeed, the new scale will exclude all importation till prices are above 61s.; and when it does begin, owing to the prices having risen, and the harbours being practically opened, the result will be, a great import of foreign grain, a great consequent drain on the Bank for gold to pay for it, an immediate contraction of issues, and widespread commercial distress. Many millions must be paid, and you have no means of doing so by sending out goods, because you have no regular trade.

37. "There is nothing of such importance to this country as to extend its commercial relations with the United States of America. There are to be found nations rapidly increasing in population and resources, which could furnish you to any extent with the means of subsistence, and take in return any conceivable amount of your manufactures. Around the great inland seas, formed in its progress to the ocean by the St Lawrence, is a cluster of five nations arising, extending from the Lakes on the north to the Ohio on the south. The territory they inhabit is twice as large as France, and six times as large as England. It contains 180,000,000 of acres, a large portion of which is of surpassing fertility. The population of this cluster of states already exceeds 300,000: if the same rate of progress shall be maintained for the next twelve years, it will contain 12,000,000. Yet are they at such a distance from this country, that they can never be formidable competitors to our farmers; for even without a duty, wheat can never be sent from thence to Britain for less than 43s. to 47s. They would be glad to receive your manufactures in exchange for the food which they send you; but how can they do so if you refuse to receive their grain, or do what is the same thing, load it with such duties as make it not worth their while to send it? Were it otherwise—were a free commercial intercourse established with them—there is no saying how long you might continue to furnish them with manufactured goods, or how extensive and lucrative might be the commerce you might carry on with them. How-

ever rising, may be the manufactures of the United States, there is not enough of that species of industry, and probably there will not be for a very long time, to furnish with clothes and other articles of rude comfort this great population.

38. "If a moderate fixed duty were established, you would have a complete change effected in the corn trade. Instead of gambling transactions, which the system of taking the average prices in the great towns has a direct tendency to foster, you would establish a sound and advantageous trade; and instead of the merchant hurrying at every rise in price to the foreign market on the Continent, and thus needlessly enhancing the price of corn, you would have a steady and well-regulated barter, which would at the same time supply your wants, and establish new fields for the consumption of the produce of your manufacturing industry. Under such a system the merchant would make his arrangements for buying a supply of corn in those places where it was cheapest, and would bring it home at a period when he thought it would be best disposed of both to the country and himself. Above all, by such a system you would extend greatly your commercial relations both of export and import with the United States. Were this system once thoroughly established and acted upon, England would become the great corn emporium of the world, and a supply of food would be secured for its inhabitants both at the cheapest and the most equable rates.

39. "Why is the earth on which we live divided into different zones and climates? Why do different countries yield different productions to people experiencing similar wants? Why are they intersected with mighty rivers, the natural highways of nations? Why are lands the most distant brought into contact by that very ocean which seems to separate them? Why, sir, it is that man may be made dependent on man. It is that the exchange of commodities may be accompanied by the extension and diffusion of knowledge, by the interchange

of mutual benefits engendering mutual kind feelings, multiplying and confirming friendly relations. It is, that Commerce may freely go forth, leading Civilisation with one hand and Peace with the other, to render mankind happier, wiser, better. This is the dispensation of Providence, this is the decree of that Power which created and disposed the universe. But in the face of it, with arrogant presumptuous folly, the dealers in restrictive duties fly, fettering the inborn energies of man, and setting up their miserable legislation instead of the great standing laws of nature." *

40. The House divided upon this debate, when there appeared for Lord John Russell's amendment 226, against it, 349—majority for Sir R. Peel, 123. This division was of course decisive of the fate of the measure in the Lower House: the second reading passed by a majority of 284 to 176. An amendment, proposed by Mr Christopher, and supported by the whole strength of the Protectionists, with the object of raising the scale of duties, was rejected by a majority of 306 to 104—a majority which was justly regarded as ominous of the fate of the whole Corn Laws at no distant period. A resolution proposed by Mr Cobden on the third reading, to the effect of abrogating the duties altogether, was in like manner rejected by 236 to 86. Thus, so far as could be gathered from the votes of the House, it was resolved to support the middle course, stand by the Minister, and to avoid the extremes on either side. In the House of Lords the bill was, upon the whole, favourably received, although the Duke of Buckingham expressed the greatest alarm at the measure. It was supported, however, by Lord Winchelsea and a number of the ultra-Tories, as well as the whole Ministerialists. The second reading passed without opposition; but Lord Melbourne afterwards moved the substitution of a fixed duty for the sliding-scale, and Lord Brougham the total abolition of all duties, both of

* The concluding striking paragraph is taken *verbatim* from Lord Palmerston's splendid peroration.—*Parl. Deb.* xlix. 619.

which were rejected, the former by a majority of 117 to 49, the latter by 87 to 6. The bill then passed and became law without any farther opposition.

41. During the progress of the measure, the nation, as might have been expected on a question of so much importance, and so interesting to large bodies of men on both sides, was strongly agitated on the subject. At first great dissatisfaction was expressed in the manufacturing towns, and in some of them Sir R. Peel was even burned in effigy for having proposed the retention of any duty at all on foreign grain. The landed proprietors also, and farmers in several places—especially those districts where wheat was largely grown—though not so noisy in the expression of their disapprobation, were not less the prey of serious apprehension as to the ability of British agriculture, oppressed as it was with so many burdens, to maintain its ground against foreign competition. By degrees, however, these feelings were softened down on both sides, and the nation generally acquiesced in the change, regarding it, though for different reasons, as, if not the best that either could have desired, at least the best which, under existing circumstances, could be obtained.

42. The alteration of the duties on grain, though not the least important, was but a part of the comprehensive plan of the Prime Minister. In addition to the loud cry for the repeal of the Corn Laws, he had to face a difficulty of a still more pressing kind, arising from the deficiency of the revenue, amounting already to £2,500,000, and which, with the necessary expenses falling on this country from the Afghanistan expedition, could not be estimated at less than £4,700,000. How to meet this with the resources of an impoverished realm, and a people who, so far from being disposed to acquiesce in an increase, were loudly clamouring for a reduction of taxation, appeared almost an impossibility; and yet the attempt absolutely required to be made, if England would avoid descending at once from her high position in the scale of nations. Sir Robert

Peel attempted it with a courage and manliness worthy of the highest admiration; and the speech with which he ushered in his important measures was one of the most remarkable of his long and brilliant career. It was on the 11th March that, in a very crowded House, and amidst breathless silence, he thus expressed himself:—

43. “No one can feel more strongly than I do the importance and extent of the duty that now devolves on me, and my own inadequacy to its discharge. But I should be unworthy of the trust committed to me, I should be unworthy of my place as Minister of the British Crown, if I could feel disheartened or discouraged, if I could feel anything but that buoyancy and contentedness of mind which ought to sustain every public man on entering on the discharge of a public duty—conscious that he is actuated by no motives that are not honourable and just, and feeling a deep and intimate conviction that, according to the best conclusion of his imperfect and fallible judgment, the measures which he intends to propose will be conducive to the welfare, I may say essential to the prosperity, of his country. We live in an important era of human affairs. There may be a natural tendency to overrate the magnitude of the crisis in which we live, or those particular events with which we are ourselves conversant; but I think it is impossible to deny that the period in which our lot and the lot of our fathers has been cast—the period which has elapsed since the first outbreak of the first French Revolution—has been one of the most memorable that the history of the world will afford. The course which England has pursued during that period will attract for ages to come the contemplation, and, I trust, the admiration of posterity. There will be a time when these countless millions that are sprung from our loins, occupying many parts of the globe, living under institutions different from ours, but speaking our language, will view with pride and admiration the example of constancy and fortitude which our fathers set during the mo-

mentous period of war. They will view with admiration our achievements by land and by sea, our determination to uphold the public credit, and all those qualities by which we were enabled ultimately to effect the deliverance of Europe. I am now addressing you after the duration of twenty-five years of peace. I am now exhibiting to you the financial difficulties and embarrassments in which you are placed, and my confident hope and belief is, that, following the example of those who have preceded you, you will look those difficulties in the face, and not refuse to make similar sacrifices to those which your fathers made for the purpose of upholding public credit.

44. "You will bear in mind that this is no casual or occasional difficulty. You will bear in mind that there are indications among all the upper classes of increased comfort and enjoyment, of increased prosperity and wealth, and that concurrently with these indications there exists a mighty evil which has been growing up for the last seven years, and which you are now called upon to meet. You will not reconcile it to your consciences to hope for relief from diminished taxation. If you have the fortitude and constancy of which you have been set the example, you will not consent with folded arms to view the annual growth of this mighty evil. You will not adopt the miserable expedient of adding during peace, and in the midst of those indications of wealth and increasing prosperity, to the burdens which posterity will be called upon to bear. If you do permit this evil to continue, you must expect the severe but just judgment of a reflecting and retrospective posterity. Your conduct will be contrasted with that of your fathers, under difficulties infinitely less pressing than theirs; with that of your fathers at the Mutiny at the Nore, and who, with a rebellion in Ireland and disaster abroad, submitted, with buoyant vigour and universal applause, with the Funds as low as 52, to a property-tax of 10 per cent. My confident hope and belief is, that now, when I devolve the responsibility upon you,

you will prove yourselves worthy of your mission as the representatives of a mighty people; that you will not tarnish the fame which it is your duty to cherish as the most glorious inheritance; and that you will not impair the character for fortitude and good faith, which, in proportion as the empire of opinion supersedes and predominates over the empire of physical force, constitutes for every people, but above all for the people of England, the main instrument by which a powerful people can repel hostile aggression and maintain extended empire.

45. "What, then, is to be done in this emergency, when remedies of no ordinary kind must be resorted to, if power is to be maintained or bankruptcy avoided? Indirect taxation has reached its limits, and can no longer be relied on. Last year the addition of 5 per cent on the customs and excise, instead of producing £5 per cent, as was expected, produced only 10s.; while the percentage of 10 per cent on the assessed taxes produced considerably more than was expected. Are we, then, to go back to the old taxes? Shall we restore the postage duties? At present, the new packet-service being added, *the Post-office produces no revenue at all, but is rather a charge*; but the penny postago has not been long enough in operation to justify us in proposing an alteration upon it. Are the taxes to be restored upon wool, salt, and leather? That would be adding to the burdens of the already suffering portion of the community, to the relief of that which is in affluence; and in addition, many new contracts have been entered into upon the faith of their abolition, and salt in particular has been applied to many new purposes. A nation's revenue may sometimes be in the end increased by reduced taxation; but, in the first instance, it is always followed by a great diminution, and a very long time is always required to restore the amount. This principle is illustrated by what has happened with respect to the reduced duties on wine, tobacco, sugar, coffee, hemp, rum, and other articles. A mere reduction of duties, therefore, will not present a resource

to meet the present emergency; and my settled opinion, my deep conviction is, that it has become necessary to make a great appeal to the holders of property.

46. "My plan is this: to levy an income-tax not exceeding 7d. in the pound, or about 3 per cent, on all incomes above £150, including all funded property, whether in the hands of natives or foreigners. I estimate the incomes of lands in Great Britain at £39,400,000; houses, £25,000,000; mines, railroads, &c., £8,400,000; in all, £72,800,000. The total produce of this tax, excluding Ireland, I estimate at £3,771,000. As Ireland is to be withdrawn from the tax, I propose to add 1s. a-gallon to the tax on spirits, the consumption of which is again increased from the decline of the influence of the temperance pledge. From this source I expect £250,000 a-year; and from the equalisation of the stamp duty in that country with that in England, £160,000 more. Four shillings a-ton is to be laid on *exported* coals, from which I expect £200,000; in all, £4,380,000, which will cause a considerable surplus after covering the whole deficiency for the year, which I estimate at £2,500,000. And then the question remains, In what way can this surplus be best applied to improve the resources or lighten the industry of the nation? This surplus I propose to apply in the reduction of the import duties in our commercial tariff.

47. "The principle on which this reduction is founded is, wherever the duty is trifling, and it is practicable, to abolish it altogether; to reduce the duty on raw materials to 5 per cent, upon articles partially manufactured to 12 per cent, and even on articles entirely manufactured, to cause it not to exceed 20 per cent. On 750 articles of import there is to be an entire remission or abatement of duty; on 450 it is left untouched. The total loss of reduction on the whole would not exceed £270,000. On sugar no reduction of duty, I regret to say, is at present practicable; but on coffee a very great diminution is proposed,

bringing down the duty to 8d. a-pound on foreign, and 4d. on British. On timber, regarding Canada as an integral part of the empire, and equally entitled to protection, it is proposed to make the duty merely nominal when it comes from British possessions, and 25s. a-load when from foreign states. The loss thence arising will be about £600,000 a-year.* On the whole, these reductions, with the necessary increase of expenditure, will swell the deficit to £3,700,000; but as the proposed new taxes will bring in £4,300,000, there will be a surplus of some half million to apply to the support of our distant wars.

48. "I have a sincere and cordial respect for the interests which apprehend they will be affected by the reductions in the tariff; but communications with the principal parties likely to be affected by it have confirmed the Government in the opinion that these measures will be attended by great public advantage to all classes, not even excluding the agricultural, by the reduction which we propose to make in meat and cattle, and, above all, by removal of that complete prohibition which we found when we approached the subject. I know that many gentlemen who are strong advocates for free trade may consider that I have not gone far enough. I know that. I believe that in the general principle of free trade there is now no great difference of opinion, and that *all agree in the general rule 'that we should buy in the cheapest market, and sell in the dearest.'* (Loud cheers from the Opposition.) I have stated the reasons on more than one occasion

* The duties proposed to be lowered, which excited the greatest alarm, were those which related to live cattle, sheep and swine, salted and dried meats, and on butter, eggs, cheese, and lard, and the substitution of a moderate duty on these articles. The proposed duties were:—

	Present Duty.	New Duty.
Live cattle, . . .	Prohibited.	£1 0 a-head.
Beef (salt), . . .	12s. a-cwt.	0 8 a-cwt.
Lard,	8s. "	0 2 "
Hams,	28s. "	0 14 "
Salmon,	Prohibited.	0 10 "
Herrings,	20s. a-barrel.	0 10 "

—*Parl. Deb. Lxiii. 267, 271.*

why I think the case of corn and sugar is an exception to this rule. I know that I may be met by the complaints of the gentlemen opposite as to the limited extent to which I have applied the principle to which I have adverted to these important articles. But I feel satisfied that it was inexpedient to apply such important changes as I have heard suggested to these important interests. I think it would be imprudent to increase the alarm which already prevails among these important classes. I think the Legislature has made as great a change as was prudent under the circumstances, and considering the existing relations between landlord and tenant, and the large amount of capital at present applied to the cultivation of the soil."

49. No debate followed on this speech in the first instance; and the Opposition were so much impressed with the courage and grandeur of the change proposed, that for some days the demon of faction was almost laid asleep, and it was thought the measure would pass unanimously. By degrees, however, they recovered from their consternation, and efforts were made to get up a popular agitation against the essential parts of the proposed measure. This was no difficult matter; for although every one, of course, except the farmers, cordially acquiesced in the reduction of duties proposed by the new commercial tariff, yet the feeling was by no means so unanimous in favour of the proposed substitute of an income-tax. Great apprehensions also prevailed in the grazing districts, that the admission of foreign cattle and salted meat would prove fatal to that portion of British, and still more Irish agriculture. The proposal, too, of an income-tax excited no small degree of alarm, especially among the middle and trading classes, who dreaded the absorption of their profits, and exposure of their affairs, especially in a time of European peace, when the necessity of so rigorous an expedient was by no means apparent. Accordingly, the Opposition saw that this was the tender point to which all

their efforts should be directed, and the main struggle took place on Lord John Russell's amendment condemnatory of that tax, which came on on the 4th April, and lasted four nights. But it was favourably received in the City, especially as indicating the resolution of the Government to uphold public credit without having recourse to a loan, which was generally apprehended, and the Funds rose from 89 to 93 in consequence.

50. Against the tax it was urged by Lord John Russell in the Commons, and Lord Brougham in the Lords: "A direct tax on income ought never to be resorted to unless in some great emergency of public affairs—when an extraordinary expenditure has become necessary for a time, or in some pressure upon the finances of the country, which can be sustained by no other means. Such a tax ought on no account to form part of the ordinary revenue of the State, but should cease with the necessity which could alone justify its adoption; inasmuch as, besides all the other objections to which it is liable, its inquisitorial character is such as must always render it odious, however trifling may be the amount abstracted. The facility with which it is collected offers a constant temptation to extravagance on the part of Government, removes the most important check upon expenditure, and dispenses with the necessity of seeking for an equality between income and expenditure in economy."

51. "The actual state of the revenue, exhibiting a deficiency of £7,500,000 in five years, and a certain deficiency of £2,500,000 more in this year, besides probable demands from our Eastern war, may perhaps justify the imposition of an income-tax as a temporary burden, especially after the attempt to add a twentieth part to the excise and customs had only produced an increase of a two-hundredth part; yet it behoves Parliament, as the faithful guardians of the people's rights and interests, to take care that, during its temporary existence, its pressure shall be distributed in such a manner as shall make it most easily and patient-

ly borne. In this case, it is indispensable that there should be no exemptions, not even of the highest and most exalted in the realm, of a due sense of which the Sovereign has afforded a shining example, in voluntarily offering to share the burden with the meanest of her subjects. But this alone is not enough. It is indispensable also that some distinction should be established between incomes derived from capital of any description and from mere labour, whether that labour be of the head or the hands, by levying a smaller proportion on the latter income than the former. For the same reason, it is indispensable, if we would avoid making the tax a direct confiscation, to make the rate different on persons living on annuities, salaries, and life-interests only, and those who are possessed, in addition, of the capital or stock from which it proceeds.

52. "Those are the exemptions or limitations which justice absolutely requires if this tax is for any period, however short, to be persevered in. There are others more likely to be earnestly contended for, which are not founded in justice, and should be resisted. There should be no distinction of persons in the civil service of the State or in receipt of pensions; they should be dealt with as belonging to the class of annuitants only. It is as little consistent with justice or sound policy to make the rate heavier upon persons of larger income than smaller, or to exempt any class from its operation, until you arrive at the class where it is not worth the expense of collecting, or the people are wholly unable to pay it. Unless this is done, not only is the tax a direct partial confiscation, by seizing upon the property of one class while others are exempt from it, but there is the greatest risk that it will degenerate into a perpetual burden, which all other classes, excepting the one burdened, have a direct interest, for their own benefit, in retaining upon them. The only way to make the tax temporary only, is to subject such a number of persons to its operation as to interest at all times

a majority of the constituencies in its abolition.

53. "The tax was originally laid on as a war-tax only, and has never been attempted to be justified on any other footing. The very act which extended it to 10 per cent expressly declared that it 'should continue in force during the present war, and until the 6th day of April next after the ratification of a definitive Treaty of peace, *and no longer*.' Words cannot be more explicit—the faith of Government cannot be more strongly pledged. Accordingly, by a great effort of the nation, it was shaken off in 1816, though Lord Castlereagh and the Government of the day made the greatest efforts to get it continued for at least a year longer, in order to wind up the expense of the gigantic war then terminated. But what is the present proposal of the Minister? It is to impose it during a period of profound peace, when, as the Speech from the Throne has just informed us, her Majesty continues to receive assurances of the most friendly dispositions from all foreign powers. To resort to the desperate measure of an income-tax in such circumstances, is nothing less than to proclaim to the world that your resources are exhausted, that indirect taxation has reached its limits, and that you are now more straitened in your finances, in the end of a peace of twenty-five years' duration, than you formerly were in the middle of a war of nearly as long duration.

54. "When Mr Pitt imposed the tax, it was to meet a deficit of £10,000,000, in the heat of a great war, which there was absolutely no other means of filling up. Is there any analogy between such a situation and the present one of this country? Your deficit is £2,500,000, about a twentieth part of your whole income. Though there has been a deficiency for some years, yet the resources of the country are unimpaired. During that time, the credit of the nation has been so high, that the Three per Cents have been at 89 and 90, and you have been able to borrow at 3½ per cent, while other nations have been obliged

to give 5.* There is therefore nothing in the state of public credit which requires an extraordinary effort — nothing which obliges you to contradict the assertion of former Parliaments, and the declarations of all classes of politicians, that this is a tax that ought to be reserved either for times of war, or difficulties with great powers in times of peace, making them equal to times of war. The budget of last year will furnish funds adequate to the whole public necessities, without recurring to this odious, unjust, and inquisitorial tax, which should be reserved as a last resource for the country in periods of extreme peril and difficulty."

55. Lord John Russell's amendment was rejected, on the 13th April, by a majority of 308 to 202, and on the 30th May the third reading was carried by a majority of 130. In the Lords, the bill passed by a majority of 71. Notwithstanding these large majorities in both Houses, however, the change introduced great alarm into the country, especially the grazing districts, which were most threatened by the changes in the tariff. The admission of horned cattle at a duty of £1 a-head, and sheep, pigs, and salted meat at very reduced duties, naturally excited great alarm among the agriculturists, who were well aware that these animals were reared in countries where rent

* Sir R. Peel made a happy retort on this allusion to the high state of the Funds, as affording the means of meeting the public necessities without recurring to an income-tax. "If you say it is better to go on a little longer with the present system, increasing the debt a little more, funding at 91, why are the Three per Cents at 91? Who has made them 91? Public credit is high; the Funds have risen, and, say you, 'You can have a loan easily now.' Oh you miserable financiers!—(Laughter and cheers.) The Funds are high, because you have shown a disposition not to resort to loans in times of peace." —*Parl. Deb.* III. 444.

In this debate, Sir R. Peel stated the deficiency at—

United Kingdom,	£2,570,000
India,	2,430,000
Total,	£5,000,000

while the surplus the Whigs received on entering upon office was £3,000,000.—*Ann. Reg.* 1842, p. 89.

and wages were not a half of what they are in the British Islands. The oxen of Holstein, and the dairy produce of Holland, were particularly dreaded, and appearances for some time seemed to justify the apprehension. Butcher-meat from Hamburg was advertised at threepence a-pound; beef and mutton fell a third in the London market; and during the panic great numbers of graziers sold off their whole stock, in the belief that the country would be wholly supplied from foreign parts. By degrees, however, the alarm subsided; people recollected that it takes a year to make a sheep, three to form an ox; and the immediate rise of prices which ensued in the countries from which importation was chiefly dreaded, proved that the competition was not likely to be so formidable as had been apprehended. Meat, after a great fall, soon rose again to its former level of 6d. and 7d. a-pound; and the subsequent importation, though by no means inconsiderable, has not been so large as to warrant any well-grounded apprehensions that *this branch* of British agriculture is likely to suffer materially from the change. On the contrary, the evident tendency of the new tariff has been to cause the corn-lands to be thrown into grass, and render the nation dependent on foreigners, not for its meat, but for its bread. This is exactly what took place in the last days of the Roman Empire, when Italian agriculture was destroyed by the free importation of wheat from Egypt and Libya; but the Italian landlords still drew considerable rents from vast herds of cattle which wandered over the Ausonian plains, of which the present desolate Campagna is a remnant and an example.

56. Impartial consideration, now that their effect has been tested by experience, must lead to the conclusion that these changes on the tariff introduced by Sir R. Peel were expedient, and required by the circumstances of society. The reason is one of convincing force, though, of course, it was not alluded to by Sir R. Peel or any of his party, or indeed on either

side of the House. This is, that as the price of every article of consumption had on an average been lowered at least 50 per cent by the contraction of the currency, it was essential that the money duties should be reduced, if possible, in a similar proportion, or the burden of the import duties would be practically seriously augmented. To have done justice to the nation, taxation of every sort should have been reduced in a like degree, including that which went to provide for the interest of the National Debt; but as this was impossible, it was at least something to reduce the money duties on imported articles, and thereby lower their cost in proportion to the lessened income of those who were to purchase them. It is true, this was hard on those who lived by the production of such articles, and at first sight seemed an injustice; but in reality it was not so. The price of labour, and of raw materials of all sorts, having been reduced also 50 per cent by the monetary changes, the cost of production was lessened to them in the same proportion, and the expense of their own living had been reduced in a similar degree. Sir R. Peel said that the income-tax of 3 per cent would be more than compensated to every person who paid it by the lessened price of every article of consumption occasioned by his tariff; and although there are few of the payers of the tax who will concur in that opinion, yet none can deny that a reduction of at least 50 per cent in the cost of living had been made by the monetary changes that he had introduced, which imperatively called for a corresponding reduction in the burdens with which their articles of consumption were affected.

57. This leads to a very curious reflection. The financial situation of the nation had become so serious, and the deficit so alarming, that it had overturned one Administration, and forced an entire change of commercial policy on another. The nation was steeped in misery, and indirect taxation had reached its limits; yet foreign affairs had become so threatening that a great increase of the national armaments

was indispensable. The whole experience and talent of the Legislature were taxed to the uttermost to discover a remedy for these manifold evils, and none could be thought of but recurring, in a period of profound European peace, to the grinding tax heretofore reserved as a last resource for the exigencies and dangers of war. Yet was the real remedy easy, cheap, certain, injurious to no one, profitable to all. Nothing was required but to send a letter from the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the Governors of the Bank of England, authorising the notes issued on securities to be raised from £14,000,000 to £21,000,000, being in proportion to the increase of transactions since the £14,000,000 was fixed. If to this had been added a provision for the issue of inconvertible notes, under proper restrictions, to the amount of the gold withdrawn in periods of a serious drain of the precious metals, the effect would have been certain. Instantly despondency would have been succeeded by hope, poverty by comfort, compulsory idleness by willing industry, financial embarrassment by an overflowing treasury. Nothing but to confess a gigantic error was wanting to repair boundless calamities, to restore happiness to a suffering realm. But to have done so required, in some, the magnanimous confession of former mistakes; in others, a surrender of, to them, a most profitable usurpation; in all, a close attention to a subject of universal interest, and but very partial comprehension. The proof of this, however, is now decisive. Sir Robert Peel's subsequent change in 1844, without his designing it, induced such an extension of the currency as was required, though on the most perilous footing, and two years of prosperity, followed by a frightful commercial crisis, ensued. Nature gave a lasting extension on a solid foundation, by opening her reserves of gold in 1851, and unbroken prosperity, interrupted only by the brief events of a terrible war, has been the consequence.

58. For the same reason the income-

ded, generally speaking, as a wise and just measure at the time it was imposed. The necessity for it was as great as when first proposed by Mr Pitt; and the wars in Afghanistan and China, if less dangerous, were hardly less costly than those which had been waged with European potentates. The currency system had all turned to the advantage of realised property; the *Times*, the great advocate for that system, boasted in the pride of its heart that it had made a sovereign worth two sovereigns. This, though a little exaggerated, was in the main true; but as the moneyed interest had thus largely benefited by a system under which every other interest had essentially suffered, nothing could be more just than that it should bear the burden of the increased taxation, which that very system had rendered irrecoverable from all the other classes of the community. In a word, the monetary system was a class system of legislation designed for the benefit of the rich, and which had ended in ruining the poor; and it had now led to its natural and just result, that of rendering class taxation, of that very body of the rich, unavoidable if the public revenue was to be upheld and national bankruptcy averted.

59. But for the very same reason, the injustice of levying the tax at the same rate upon the wages of labour or the income of annuitants, as upon incomes derived from land or realised capital, was not merely to oppress industry by taxing a perishable at the same rate as a durable income, but to subject it to the still farther injustice of making the sufferers under class legislation pay at the same rate as those enriched by it—those whose incomes had been halved, as those which had been doubled by recent changes. The injustice of the double burden thus imposed upon the industrious classes was so obvious, that, had it been widespread, it must have been speedily abrogated. But it was not widespread, and therefore it was continued, and still continues. The whole persons assessed under Schedule D—that is,

the professional class in Great Britain—were only 143,000, a mere trifle among 27,000,000, then forming the population of the British Islands. This handful of men were not the rich bankers or capitalists whose voice is always listened to with respect by Government; they were for the most part hard-working citizens, too few to inspire terror by their numbers, too poor to command influence by their riches.

60. The vast majority who escaped the tax because their incomes were below the line when it began, gave themselves no sort of disquiet about an injustice by which they were not affected, and rather rejoiced at an impost on others which might be the means of cheapening commodities. The holders of realised wealth in secret beheld with satisfaction the burden imposed in such a manner upon the industrious classes as might lessen its pressure on themselves. Thus crushed by the weight of capital, the industrial class remained oppressed with an injustice which probably never would have been thought of but in a country subjected to class government, nor continued but in one ruled by its influences. The Ministers, assailed by arguments to which they could make no reply, contented themselves with observing that the whole income-tax was an injustice, but that such were the practical difficulties involved in the question that they could not see their way to a more equitable distribution of its burden;—the usual answer when Government is pressed with a request which they cannot assign any reason for not granting, but which they are resolved, for some undivulged cause, not to concede. It is remarkable that, while this injustice has been perpetrated and continued for fifteen years, in a country boasting all the blessings of representative institutions, in despotic Denmark the property-tax has been arranged in so different a manner, that the only question is whether it is not unduly favourable to the middle and industrious classes.*

* "In Denmark the property-tax is on a graduated scale in proportion to the amount

61. If Sir R. Peel was sincere in his appeal to the holders of property to submit to a temporary burden in order to extricate the nation from the financial embarrassments in which it had become involved, he himself gave the noblest proof that he was prepared to act upon the principles which he recommended to others. On the very night (11th March) when he pronounced that eloquent appeal, he had received the accounts of the death of Sir W. Macnaghten, and the Affghanistan disaster. Veiling with heroic courage his knowledge of the calamity under a calm exterior and a serene visage, he addressed the assembly as if nothing had occurred to break the even tenor of his way, instead of intelligence having been received of the greatest disaster in British annals. The mournful events, however, could not long be concealed, and such was the anxiety of the public for in-

formation as to their details, that almost every night, for some weeks after, he was besieged with questions in the House from persons who had relatives involved in the frightful ruin. To all these questions he answered with the kindness of a father, and the resignation of a Christian; and when the moment for decision arrived, and he required openly to face the calamity and adopt measures to meet it, he acted with the consistency of an old Roman. He openly admitted the magnitude of the disaster which had been sustained, but stated that Government were resolved to meet it in a worthy spirit, and that every effort would be made to restore victory to the British standards. This intrepid announcement was received with loud cheers from both sides of the House; reinforcements to a large extent were sent out to the armies in India, so as to raise the British forces there to 45,000 men; and Europe, after a disaster had been sustained, which it was generally supposed, and perhaps hoped, had finally destroyed the British power in India, beheld with astonishment preparations making to elevate it to an unprecedented pitch of grandeur.

of the income enjoyed by the persons taxed, from whatever source derived. It may well be doubted whether this is not confiscation of the fortunes above the line where the heavier burden begins. But the curious thing is, that in the popular community the injustice perpetrated was on the middle class; in the despotic monarchy on the nobility and rich."—DOUBLEDAY'S *Life of Peel*, ii. 347.

CHAPTER L.

ENGLAND, FROM THE AFFGHANISTAN DISASTER IN 1841 TO THE PASSING OF THE BANK CHARTER ACT IN 1844.

1. ALMOST unnoticed amidst the multitude of important objects which in this session crowd upon the attention, a bill was brought forward, calculated in the end to work a great and durable change on the national mind and fortunes. This was the COPYRIGHT BILL, introduced by Lord Mahon (now Earl Stanhope), which this year was sanctioned by both Houses, and passed into law. The

right of authors to the property of the written expression of their thoughts, not recognised by the common law of England when published, was "the creature" of statute, and by the celebrated Act of Queen Anne had been limited to fourteen years, with the addition of fourteen more if the author survived the first. This strange distinction, which in the case of works of standard merit likely to be prized

by posterity, and therefore valuable to the author's family, made so great a difference in the advantages accruing to them according as he survived or did not survive a certain arbitrary time, had long been felt as unjust. It had not escaped observation, too, that the effect of limiting the copyright of authors to so short a period, had been to direct original thought and genius to works of transient popularity rather than durable utility. Impressed with these ideas, the accomplished Mr Serjeant Talfourd had made repeated attempts to obtain for authors a further extension of the duration of copyright; and the example of Sir Walter Scott's family, which was immersed in difficulties at a time when his literary works should have yielded a splendid fortune to his descendants, was strongly founded on. The learned Serjeant's efforts, however, which were continued through three successive sessions, were unsuccessful, chiefly through the efforts of Mr Macaulay, who, strange to say, strained every nerve to defeat a measure calculated to give independence to a class of which he himself was so bright an ornament. At length, in this session, the tardy act of justice was done to literary men, and by Lord Mahon's bill the copyright was fixed at the entire life of the author, and seven years after; or if these terms did not extend to so much, at all events to forty-two years.

2. There can be no doubt that this was a very important step in the right direction, and far more for the interests of nations than those of literary men. The beneficial effects of the change are already apparent, and are becoming more so every day. The extension of the power of reading to the great body of the people, and the vast increase which has consequently taken place in the sale of publications, has indeed put an end to the degrading patronage of rank and power to genius, which was felt as so painful by the authors in the time of Queen Anne, and appears so strongly in the fulsome flattery of their dedications. The public has

become the great patron, and superseded all others. But the change has only enhanced the dangers to which philosophic thought and literary effort are exposed. The public is a jealous mistress, and very little experience is required to show that incessant flattery is the best passport to her favours. The servility of the press to the reigning multitude in democratic communities, is at least equal to all that ever was shown to powerful ministers or charming duchesses;—witness the press of republican France in former days, of republican America, and a large part of it in this country in these times.

3. This evil is of the most serious kind, and it is constantly increasing with the extension of education, and the augmentation of the number of readers; for that only multiplies the numbers to whom the flattering unction must be applied. "No man," says Goethe, "ever spoke for half an hour to a mixed audience without flattering them, that he was not thought tedious." This is not less true of writers than speakers. "Democracy," says Guizot, "has two great faults; it aspires passionately to rule without control, and it is constantly governed by *the interests and passions of the moment*. To judge by the experience of the past, it is of all the social powers the most exacting and unforeseeing—that which is most jealous of limits or division of power, and also that which is most exclusively governed by present fancies, without a thought either of the past or the future." The only way in which it is possible to prevent literature from falling in with and aggravating this perilous tendency in numerous and highly educated communities, is to give authors *an interest in the approbation of future times*, and thereby emancipate them from the exclusive dominion of the present. Unless this is done, the standard literature of the country, like the daily or monthly press, will be entirely devoted to inflaming the passions and aggravating the prejudices of the moment. Truth is always distasteful in

the outset of its career to the majority: witness the reception of the discovery of the motions of the earth by Galileo, of the circulation of the blood by Harvey, of the system of the heavens by Copernicus and Newton. The Cross itself, which was to save the world, was borne in pain and sorrow by our Saviour: "Crucify him! crucify him!" was the universal cry. So different is the first impulse of the multitude from the ultimate conclusions of reason. No state of things can be conceived more perilous than that in which this first is the ruling power, without the flywheel of the second. If it is of long continuance, it may come to give an awful meaning to the banishment of mankind from paradise in consequence of eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge. But as certainly as prejudice and passion govern men in regard to the present, so reason and truth prevail in the end. "Magna est veritas et prævalebit" is a maxim of universal truth and application; and the only way to prevent it, to rule in the end the general thought, is to give authors a durable interest in the publication of their ideas, and thereby relieve them from the necessity of flattering only present passions or interests.

4. In January 1841; Mr O'Connell said at a meeting of the Repeal Association in Ireland, "I shall for my part vote for the Whigs to keep them in; but I tell them honestly and firmly they have lost altogether the hearts of the Irish people, and nothing but the LOUD CRY FOR REPEAL shall henceforth be heard among us. I did not resume the repeal agitation till I saw how utterly unable the Whigs were to effect anything." The first step in this movement was to collect money, the sinews of war, and this was done in a very remarkable way, highly characteristic of the ascendant which O'Connell and the priesthood had acquired over the entire Catholic population. The sum paid in Ireland for ardent spirits, not less than from £4,000,000 to £5,000,000 annually, presented a fund of vast amount, and perfectly equal to the necessities of the case, if

any considerable part of it could be realised, for the purpose of agitation. Great as was the influence of the Agitator with his countrymen, however, it was doubtful if this could be effected. It was so, however, to a most surprising degree by supplanting one passion by another—the desire for drink by the thirst for independence. To divert the funds hitherto wasted in the public-house into the coffers of the Repeal Association was the great object, and this was done by a movement veiled under the guise of philanthropy, which for a time was attended with surprising success. The temperance movement began. Father Matthew, a monk of ardent disposition, nervous eloquence, and enthusiastic philanthropy, was the soul of the movement. The benevolent ecclesiastic was the unsuspecting hand by which the Catholic hierarchy carried on their projects of converting the surplus funds of Irish labour to the purposes of repeal agitation. The effect of his heart-stirring eloquence was at first prodigious; it recalled the days when Peter the Hermit roused the dormant energies of Europe in behalf of the Holy Land. Multitudes rushed forward everywhere to take the temperance pledge from the hands of the great apostle of sobriety. Fifty thousand met him here, forty thousand there; his journeys resembled rather the progress of a mighty conqueror than the movements of a humble priest bent only on an errand of mercy. Such was the enthusiasm excited, so general the transports, that the consumption of spirits in Ireland fell off in one year from 10,000,000 to 3,000,000 gallons, and no small part of the embarrassment of the English treasury arose from the sudden temperance of the people of Ireland.

5. It has often been remarked, that whenever the people give over *fighting at fairs* in Ireland, you may be sure that some serious outbreak is in contemplation, and Government will do well to stand on their guard. Never was this truth more clearly demonstrated than on the present occasion. The effect of the taking of the temper-

ance pledge by two millions of men in the first instance was immense. Serious crime rapidly diminished, as it will always do when by any means a check is given, even for a time, to the dreadful passion for ardent spirits. The judges everywhere congratulated the grand juries on the lightness of the calendar; predial outrages declined, and the philanthropic and inexperienced began to indulge the pleasing hope that, by the zeal of a benevolent friar, an antidote had at length been discovered for the most demoralising social corruption of civilised man. It must be confessed that the returns of crime in Ireland for some years seemed to justify the anticipation. Convictions decreased from 12,000 in 1839 to 8000 in 1844.* But all these movements, originating in sudden conversion, not lasting changes of habit, are merely temporary in their operation, and not unfrequently are followed by a reaction which renders matters worse than they had been before the change commenced. When the political and sacerdotal objects for which the movement had been set on foot had ceased, and the repeal agitation had failed, the temperance movement came to an end, and was succeeded by the darkest era ever known of Irish suffering and crime. The reaction in favour of whisky became as strong as the movement in favour of temperance ever had been. The annual consumption of spirits rose again to 12,000,000 gallons, and with it, aided by the terrible calamities of 1846 and 1847, swelled the rolls of crime to an unprecedented amount.†

Years.	Committed in Ireland.	Convicted.
1839, .	26,892	12,049
1840, .	23,833	11,194
1841, .	20,796	9,287
1842, .	21,186	9,874
1843, .	20,126	8,620
1844, .	19,446	8,042
1845, .	16,696	7,101

—PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, 668.

Years.	Committed in Ireland.	Convicted.
† 1846, .	18,492	8,639
1847, .	31,209	15,233
1848, .	38,528	18,206
1849, .	41,489	21,202

—PORTER, 668.

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6. It soon appeared to what purpose the large funds rendered available by the temperance movement, while it lasted, were to be turned by the Irish agitators. No sooner did it appear that the fate of the Whigs was sealed, and that Sir Robert Peel was to succeed to the helm, than his support of the Government ceased, and O'Connell commenced a *guerre à mort* against England and everything belonging to it. His first move was to endeavour to exclude English manufactures from the country; but that attempt soon failed among a people for the most part possessing no manufactures, and invariably so poor as the Irish. His next step was a well-devised one, and was attended with important consequences. He converted the Precursors' Association into a new one styled the REPEAL ASSOCIATION; and thenceforward his whole efforts were directed to further its objects. The organisation of the Association was the same as that which had proved so successful in bringing about Catholic emancipation. It consisted of associates, members, and volunteers. A card was given to each person entering, which served the purpose of mutual recognition without expressly violating the law against passwords and signs. Each of these associates paid 1s. on entering and getting his ticket. The next class was the members, and they paid £1 each on entering, or engaged to obtain twenty associates at 1s. each. The members received each a card, on which were inscribed prints of four of the principal places where the Irish had been successful in combating either the English or the Danes. At the top of the card was a roll or script, on which were inscribed the words, "Resolved unanimously that the claims of any body of men, other than the King, Lords, and Commons of *Ireland*, to make laws to bind this kingdom, are unconstitutional, illegal, and a grievance.—DUNGANNON VOLUNTEERS, 15th February 1782." The Association was governed by general inspectors, repeal wardens, and collectors; and it was their duty to collect the subscriptions

for the repeal cause, and transmit them to the central Association in Dublin, where they formed a fund which soon became so celebrated under the name of *the Rent*. With such zeal did the wardens and collectors discharge their duties, that the rent ere long reached £3000 a-week; and O'Connell boasted, in the pride of his heart, that he had two millions of repealers under his banners!

7. The plan of operations concocted between this consummate master of the art of agitation and his confederate chiefs was, not to break out into open rebellion, but to approach it as closely as possible, and intimidate Government by the display of numbers. For this purpose, meetings on a gigantic scale were to be held in all parts of the country where they were likely to be successful, to which the people were to be collected by the wardens, priests, and collectors in the different parishes. The temperance chiefs were, for the most part, enrolled in this ulterior movement; and the detachments from the different parishes generally mustered, preceded by their bands. When Sir R. Peel's return to power in May 1841 was evident, simultaneous meetings were held in every parish of Ireland, to implore the Queen "not to receive into her confidence the bitter and malignant enemies of her faithful Irish people." The peasants came in companies, led by their priests, and preceded by the temperance bands, often a distance of ten or fifteen miles, and marched back the same day. The enthusiasm thus excited was indescribable; all hearts were stirred, all understandings swept away by it. A bed-ridden old woman was carried ten miles "to seek salvation for her country." The numbers collected on these occasions, though much exaggerated by the repeal press, were undoubtedly immense. At a meeting on the Hill of Kilnoe, in the county of Clare, in May 1841, it was said that 100,000, and probably really 50,000, were present. These meetings, which were generally addressed by O'Connell in person, were held through the whole of 1841, and though intermitted in 1842, from a

doubt whether Sir R. Peel's Ministry would not be swept away, and the Liberal Government restored by the Anti-Corn-Law agitation, yet they were renewed with fresh vigour in 1843, and soon acquired the most formidable consistency.

8. As these meetings generally consisted of thirty, forty, or fifty thousand persons, it may readily be believed that it was impossible that any voice, how powerful soever, could be heard by such prodigious multitudes. But this difficulty, apparently insurmountable, was got over by a very simple device. A number of wardens were stationed in concentric circles round the hustings from which O'Connell addressed them, and they repeated what he said with stentorian lungs, until the re-echo reached the farthest extremity of the crowd, and next morning the whole speech was published by the newspapers. The character of his addresses may be judged of by the following extract from a speech delivered at Trillick, on March 15, 1843: "When I think of the multitudes that surround me; when I see the bright eye and hardy look which belong to Irishmen beyond any people upon earth, I ask you, 'Will you be slaves?' You will answer, 'No;' and I reply, 'I shall either be in my grave or a freeman.' You can expect nothing from the English Parliament: idle sentiments will not now do: I call on you to act at once: make your choice either to be freemen or slaves."

"Hereditary bondsmen, know ye not,
Who would be free, themselves must strike
the blow?"

And at an immense meeting held at Tara, so famous in Irish song, on 15th August 1843, he said, amidst thunders of applause: "I was laughed at in January because I said this would be the repeal year: does any one laugh now? It is my turn now to make merry. I am now able positively to announce to you that before twelve months are over, a Parliament will be held in College Green, Dublin, and the hurrahs for repeal will be heard over all the land. The Duke of Wellington

began by threatening us: he does not talk of this now; he is getting loopholes made in the old barracks; he is preparing to stand a siege—as if we were going to break our heads against stone walls! The Queen will call the Parliament: we will march to College Green with law and order inscribed on our banners. I shall have all the teetotallers with me: they are the finest effluence of human wishes: there is not an army in the world that I would not fight with them.” And the unanimous adhesion of the clergy to the repeal movement was declared by the Rev. Dr Higgins, the Roman Catholic bishop of Armagh, who said at a dinner held at Mullingar, on *Sunday*, 14th May 1843: “I formally announce to you that *all the bishops of Ireland have formally declared themselves repealers*, and that from shore to shore we are all such. (Immense applause.) I defy all the ministers of England to put down the agitation in the county of Armagh. If they beset our temples, and mix our people with spies, we will prepare our people for the circumstances; and if they bring us for that to the scaffold, in dying in behalf of our country, we will bequeath our wrongs to our successors. (Enthusiastic cheers.)”

9. While meetings attended by forty and fifty thousand persons were almost weekly addressed by inflammatory addresses of this description, and the peasantry, instead of attending to their business, neglected the land, and were hurrying from one crowded meeting to another, Government looked on with apparently supine indifference, and even seemed to favour the agitation. Large bodies of police and military were always in attendance, but out of sight of the assembled crowds, so as to avoid any collision with the people. No prosecutions were instituted either against the orators who spoke treason, or the newspapers which printed it. One indication of vigour alone was given by Government, which was the carrying of an “Arms Act,” whereby it was rendered necessary for the possessors of arms to have them registered, branded by an officer appointed for the

purpose, and a small licence taken out for them. It was evident that this measure was absolutely necessary for the preservation of life and property in Ireland, and it did not differ materially from the bill introduced by Lord Morpeth in 1838; but nevertheless it was made the subject of violent party conflict in the House, and was opposed by the whole strength of the united Liberal and Catholic parties. Introduced on the 29th May, it was so obstinately resisted that it did not get through the Commons till the 9th August; but it went rapidly through the Lords, and became law at the very end of the session, on the 22d of the same month. But meanwhile, under the skilful directions of the Duke of Wellington, arrangements were making in every direction to meet a serious conflict. The smaller posts were generally abandoned, and the troops concentrated in the larger ones, which were barricaded and loopholed, and every preparation made for a vigorous defence against the attacks which were hourly apprehended.

10. The reason why the Government, to the surprise of all Europe, remained so long quiescent under the tremendous agitation which was now in every quarter convulsing Ireland, was, that they were desirous not to strike till they had a fair prospect of a conviction of the leaders of the movement—an event which, with the English law requiring unanimity in juries, and the divided state of the country in Ireland, was by no means likely soon to occur. Canada had recently afforded a memorable example of the embarrassment arising from an accumulation of prisoners whose guilt was evident, but whom no jury would convict. At length, however, Sir R. Peel deemed the moment for action had arrived, the blow was struck, and it proved decisive. The repealers, relying on their long impunity, had now almost thrown off the mask, and talked openly of their “repeal cavalry and infantry,” of marching and countermarching. The language constantly used was now, “Repeal or Blood;” and the crowds swore to “live or die for O’Connell.”

Preparations were making for a monster meeting on the greatest scale at Clontarf, when a proclamation was suddenly issued by the Lord-Lieutenant forbidding the assemblage, and calling upon all well-disposed persons to abstain from attending it. The proposed place of meeting was occupied at daylight by large bodies of cavalry and infantry, which were strongly supported by reserves in Dublin; the guns of the Pigeon-house Fort were turned on the road leading from Dublin to Clontarf; the hustings were removed; all persons coming to the meeting turned back; and six thousand men in all assembled to support the majesty of the law. The Repeal Association immediately yielded. Parties were sent out in all directions to warn away and disperse the people, and the meeting was stopped. This was followed by the arrest of O'Connell and the leaders of the Repeal Association, which took place a few days after, on a charge of conspiracy, sedition, and unlawful assembling.

11. The trials came on in the beginning of November, and every effort was made from the very first to obstruct the proceedings by all legal means, and to strain every nerve to intimidate and overawe both the grand and petty jury. Objections were made at every step to the proceedings; and with such success were the efforts of the repealers attended, that a great proportion of the jurymen paid the fine of £50 to avoid serving. At length the objections in point of form were overruled, and the petty jury was sworn. O'Connell came to the bar in the lord mayor's carriage, followed by twenty-three other carriages filled with his friends. The opening speech of the Attorney-General was very powerful, and made a great impression, unfolding as it did a series of proceedings which recalled the Rebellion of 1798, and left no doubt on any one's mind that a crisis of the same description was at hand. The public anxiety rose to the highest pitch as the proceedings drew to their close; but no words can describe the sensation which was felt when the foreman of the jury returned

with a verdict finding all the accused guilty of some of the counts in the indictment. A yell arose in the court, which was re-echoed through all the streets and lanes adjoining, when the verdict was known, which froze every heart with horror. Mr Smith O'Brien, a gentleman of family and fortune, who afterwards obtained an unenvied celebrity in Ireland, generously came in with O'Connell when he was to hear judgment; a courageous step at such a moment, which deservedly excited the enthusiasm of all present. Sentence was not pronounced till May 30, 1844, and by it O'Connell was ordered to undergo a year's imprisonment, to pay a fine of £2000, and to find security under heavy recognisances to keep the peace for seven years to come. The other persons accused were fined £50 each, and sentenced to nine months' imprisonment. Mr O'Connell was allowed to choose his own place of confinement, and he selected the Richmond Penitentiary, to which he was immediately conveyed. The judge (Burton) who pronounced sentence was so much affected that he could scarcely discharge his duty.

12. The news of O'Connell's conviction spread like wildfire over Ireland, and produced a prodigious sensation. Bale-fires were lighted up on all the hills, and there was at first some talk of a general rising; but this was forbidden by the very chief, who issued a proclamation enjoining the people to keep the peace for six or at most twelve months, and they would have a parliament in College Green. He was permitted to see his friends in confinement, but not to receive deputations; and it was soon apparent that his power had received a death-blow. His alleged invincibility was at an end; the determination of Government at length to terminate the agitation, and strike at the guilty party, had been made manifest; and after so flagrant a proof of the erroneous nature of his predictions regarding himself, men no longer trusted those of which he was so profuse regarding his country. Sunday, 7th July, was appointed as a day for a general prayer in all the

Catholic chapels of Ireland in behalf of O'Connell; but there was an ominous difference among the spiritual authorities regarding it. The Archbishop of Dublin interdicted the prayer in his province, and it was only partially obeyed in the rest of Ireland. Meanwhile an appeal against the sentence was presented first to the Queen's Bench in Ireland, and next to the House of Peers in England. The sentence was affirmed by the former, but the issue was different with the latter. The case was referred, according to usual custom, to the twelve judges for their opinion; and though they were unanimous in pronouncing the findings of the jury on six out of the eleven counts in the indictment to be bad from not returning a correct answer to the charges, yet, by a majority of seven to two, they held that enough which was unobjectionable remained in the verdict to sustain the sentence. With this opinion in favour of the conviction, the case returned to the House of Peers, and then the result was different. The lay lords, with great propriety, abstained from voting, and the case was left to the law lords. These were Lord-Chancellor Lyndhurst, Lords Denman, Cottenham, Campbell, and Brougham. Three of them overruled the opinion of the twelve judges, and held the objections insurmountable; two—Lords Lyndhurst and Brougham—adhered to the opinion of the majority of the judges. The result was, that the sentence was quashed, and the accused all set at liberty.

13. Leaving it to English lawyers to determine in point of law between these conflicting authorities, and to say whether the opinion of Lords Lyndhurst and Brougham, and the seven English judges, or that of the three Whig law lords and the two judges be the better founded, one thing is perfectly clear, that never was a more magnificent exhibition of British justice exhibited than on this occasion, and never a step taken attended with more beneficial effect in stilling the agitation of the neighbouring country. O'Connell was now at the mercy of

the assembly he had so long vilified and reviled. Nothing was required but for three of the numerous peers who were in attendance behind the Woolsack awaiting the issue to step forward and take a part in the vote, and the thing was done. They did not do so; they yielded to the scruples, perhaps too critically conceived, of the three law lords, and allowed the great Agitator to issue, apparently, a triumphant martyr from prison, rather than violate, even in the most trifling matters of form, the strictest principles of British justice. Every one saw that O'Connell was really guilty—that he owed his liberation to a minute technical difficulty. But they saw, at the same time, that this difficulty had been given effect to by the highest Saxon court, composed almost entirely of political opponents, upon whom he had heaped every epithet of abuse which the English language could afford. The moral effect of this was great. If the victory in legal niceties was with O'Connell, that in opinion and justice was with the House of Peers; and he never afterwards regained his position in public estimation. He had been caught in his own toils, and liberated from them by the hand of his enemies.

14. His subsequent career was short, and deserves to be noticed only as the closing scene in the life of one who had so long held so prominent a position in the public eye. He was indulged with a triumphal procession from jail when the reversal of the sentence was communicated to him, and an immense crowd assembled to witness his departure, and attend him home; but it was already evident that his influence was on the wane. The year of liberation passed without a parliament being assembled in College Green—and the next, and the next. Men began to throw in his teeth the non-accomplishment of his promises; the credulity even of the Irish peasantry came to yield to the repeated disappointment of their hopes. He was never formidable again; and he had the misfortune, before he died, of seeing himself passed in the career of

popularity younger, more audacious, and experienced men. "Young Ireland" reproached him with having "surrendered," when, on the return of the "base, bloody, and brutal Whigs" to power in 1846, he was reinstated in the commission of the peace, and supported the Russell Ministry in Parliament. Symptoms of internal disease and approaching dissolution ~~em~~ long appeared. His eye became heavy, his countenance fell, his step, once so firm and elastic, waxed feeble and tremulous. By the advice of his physicians he went abroad; but he experienced no material benefit from change of scene, or the respect with which he was received by the Catholic authorities; and having reached Genoa, he expired there on 15th May 1847. After his death his reputation rapidly sank, and among none so completely as those who had so long worshipped his footsteps. It was essentially injured in the estimation of the world in general, by the revelations made by the Government commissioners sent down to investigate the condition of Ireland during the famine which so soon afterwards ensued, to the effect that the Liberator who had uttered so many eloquent declamations on the wrongs of Ireland was himself a grinding middleman, who exacted three times as much from his starving tenantry as he himself paid for the land to his overlord. His reputation sank so rapidly, that at a sale of his effects, which took place in Dublin some years after, a bust of the great Liberator only brought sixpence!

15. The general distress continued unabated during the first six months of 1843; but towards the close of the year symptoms of decided amendment began to appear. This was probably in some degree owing to the impulse given to trade by Sir R. Peel's tariff,

but much more was to be ascribed to the increased bounty of nature, which now began to be as benign as for the five preceding years she had been rigorous. The "long, long summer" of 1842 still lives in the recollection of those who had been warmed by its sunshine, as much as the terrible winters of 1838 and 1839 are fresh in their gloomy remembrance. The autumn of that year was peculiarly fine; during the whole of August and September scarce a drop of rain fell, and the harvest was not only abundant, but, what is of almost equal importance in these northern latitudes, was got in excellent order. The effect was soon apparent. Never was seen more clearly the dependence of man upon Supreme Power, and the superior efficacy of Divine blessings to all the efforts of man in drying up the springs of public distress. The price of wheat, which in the harvest year 1841-42 had been 63s., fell in 1842-43 to 49s.; and the importation of foreign wheat, which in the former year had been 2,985,000 quarters, sank in 1843-44 to 1,606,000, and in the succeeding one to 476,000 quarters.* The effect of this happy change was great in itself; food was rendered comparatively cheap to the working classes, and the pressure of that terrible combination under which they had so long suffered, of low wages arising from commercial depression, and high prices of grain owing to bad seasons, was sensibly alleviated. But important as these effects were, they yet yielded in importance to the effects of the change on the currency, and through it on the credit and commercial enterprise of the nation. The progressive decline of imports of foreign wheat from nearly 3,000,000 quarters to less than 500,000 yearly, took off the great drain on the coffers of the Bank,

* PRICES AND IMPORTATIONS OF WHEAT.

Harvest Years	Quarters	Price.
1841-2,	2,985,422	63s. 4d.
1842-3,	2,405,217	49s. 4d.
1843-4,	1,606,902	53s. 9d.
1844-5,	476,150	46s. 7d.

—TOOKE ON PRICES, IV. 415.

The prices and importation during these astronomical years will be found in the note to section 17 of the preceding chapter.

which had so long taken place, to pay for it. The stock of bullion proportionally increased, and with it the issue of its notes, and the credit, industry, and prosperity of the country. The bullion in the Bank, which in October 1839 had been as low as £2,546,000, and in February 1840 was only £3,900,000, progressively rose with the diminution of imports of grain, till in March 1843 it stood at £11,300,000, and in March 1844 was as high as £16,100,000. The notes in circulation underwent a similar increase, having advanced from £15,500,000 in January 1840, to £22,000,000 in 1844.*

16. The effects of this marked diminution in the import of grain, and increase in the issue of notes, were very great upon general credit, and the trade and industry of the country. Prices, indeed, of all the articles of manufactured produce, did not as yet rise; but imports and exports increased, speculation revived, and that

deplorable combination of high prices of food with low rates of manufacturing wages, the inevitable result in bad seasons of a currency dependent on the retention of gold, for the time entirely ceased. The enlarged imports of cotton and other large materials for manufacture, indicated the augmented activity of the employers; while the great increase in the sale of the humbler articles of luxury, the consumption of which indicated their wellbeing, afforded a gratifying proof that prosperity was at length, after a long and dreary interval, descending to the cottages of the poor.† The effect upon the general exports and imports of the kingdom, and the revenue, was visible and striking, especially towards the close of 1843 and during the whole of 1844, when a great rise took place. And the increase of the revenue, coupled with the produce of the income-tax, which instead of £3,441,000, as Sir R. Peel had calculated, proved to be £5,400,000,

* BULLION IN THE BANK, AND NOTES IN CIRCULATION.

	Bullion.	Notes out.
Jan. 1840, . . .	£4,500,000	£15,500,000
„ 1841, . . .	4,000,000	15,600,000
„ 1842, . . .	5,600,000	16,100,000
„ 1843, . . .	10,900,000	18,500,000
„ 1844, . . .	15,200,000	19,500,000
July 1845, . . .	16,100,000	22,600,000

—TOOKE *On Prices*, iv. 437, 441.

NOTE CIRCULATION OF ENGLAND—ANNUAL AVERAGE.

Years	Bank of England.	Country Banks.			Total of England.	Bullion.
		Private.	Joint-Stock.	Total.		
1841	£16,040,000	£6,130,000	£3,600,000	£9,730,000	£26,670,000	£4,700,000
1842	18,440,000	5,300,000	3,010,000	8,310,000	26,750,000	8,100,000
1843	19,520,000	4,690,000	2,950,000	7,640,000	26,160,000	11,700,000
1844	21,210,000	4,780,000	3,390,000	8,170,000	29,880,000	15,320,000
1845	21,730,000	4,510,000	3,190,000	7,700,000	29,430,000	15,390,000

—THOM'S *Almanac* for 1860.

† IMPORTS OF THE FOLLOWING ARTICLES FROM 1839 TO 1844 INCLUSIVE.

Years	Cotton.	Silk.	Hemp.	Wool.	Sugar.	Coffee.	Tobacco.
	lb.	lb.	cwt.	lb.	cwt.	lb.	lb.
1839	389,896,000	4,788,788	995,603	57,879,000	4,678,000	41,008,000	35,605,000
1840	592,488,000	4,459,542	684,068	49,436,000	4,035,000	70,271,000	36,680,000
1841	487,992,000	4,734,755	652,165	56,170,000	4,908,000	48,317,000	43,983,000
1842	581,750,000	5,388,100	585,905	45,881,000	4,756,000	41,444,000	89,526,000
1843	673,193,000	4,964,203	735,743	49,248,000	5,020,000	88,942,000	48,775,000
1844	646,111,000	5,899,187	918,233	65,713,000	4,880,075	46,523,000	37,610,000

—TOOKE'S *History of Prices*, iv. 435.

exhibited an equally gratifying proof of reviving public prosperity.*

17. The parliamentary session of 1842, was not characterised by any measures of very great importance. So great had been the change, both in finance and commercial policy, introduced in the preceding year, that men stood still, as it were, in anxious and silent expectation of the event, and trusting for the introduction of important measures to the all-powerful Minister by whom so many had been already introduced. Such measures as were brought in related chiefly to the alleviation of that suffering which had prevailed during so many painful years, and was only towards the close of the year beginning to be alleviated. Of the many evils which that long and mournful period introduced, not the least was the almost universal use of infant labour, which had been in a measure forced upon the working classes in the manufacturing districts by the deplorable destitution to which they had so long been reduced. The children in the mineral and manufacturing districts in an especial manner stood in need of legislative protection, for there the workshop and the mine stood in fearful competition with the domestic hearth and the school; and even the best disposed parents were forced to send their offspring to work at a very early period of life, in order to add to the scanty earnings of the family. Struck with these evils, but unhappily still blind to the real cause to which they were owing, a philanthropic and energetic nobleman (Lord Ashley), whose life has been devoted

to the amelioration of the poor, brought in a bill in 1842 for a committee to inquire into the employment of women and children in mines and collieries: Government acceded to the motion, and the committee was appointed. The evidence which they collected was of so startling and horrible a kind that it led to the bill, which he introduced on the report of the committee, passing both Houses with very little opposition, except from the mineral proprietors immediately interested. By this Act the employment of females in mines was absolutely prohibited in all cases; that of boys was limited to ten years of age and upwards, and inspectors were appointed to see the Act carried into full execution. This change was severely felt at the time, as tending to throw a number of hard-working women and children out of employment, and in the first instance it augmented rather than relieved the distress in that branch of industry. Yet was the alteration loudly called for, and in the end beneficial; for it put an immediate stop to a practice, a remnant of savage times, which utterly brutified and demoralised women; and it protected in some degree the class in the community which stood most in need of the shield of the Legislature—infant children employed in underground labour, withdrawn from the sight and sympathy of the great body of the community.

18. Encouraged by this success, Lord Ashley brought forward a motion for an address to the Queen for a general system of religious education for the working classes, and this was followed up by a bill, introduced by Sir James

* EXPORTS AND IMPORTS OF GREAT BRITAIN. 6

Years.	Imports. Official Value.	British and Irish Exports. Declared Value.	Revenue.
1839	£62,004,000	£58,233,580	£47,844,000
1840	67,482,964	51,406,480	45,567,565
1841	64,877,962	57,634,629	48,084,380
1842	65,204,729	47,381,028	46,965,681
1843	70,093,853	52,278,449	52,582,817†
1844	85,441,555	58,584,292	54,008,754

† Income-tax.

Graham, for the better regulation and education of factory children. By this bill it was proposed that no children between the ages of six and thirteen should work more than six and a half hours; that they should be obliged to attend schools appointed for the purpose; and that the children of Catholics and Dissenters should be committed for so many hours in each week to religious teachers, according to the creed of their respective parents. The measure was to include pauper children at factories, and the children of all persons, whether paupers or not, whom their parents chose to send to the school, whether they were factory children or not. There were to be seven trustees to each school under the Act, three of whom were to be the clergyman of the district and two of his churchwardens; the other four elected by the ratepayers. The bill, which was evidently founded on the right principles on the subject, met with very general support in the House of Commons; and the Queen's reply to the address presented to her on the subject was very cordial. But difficult in the extreme are all attempts at beneficent legislation in matters where sectarian zeal or sacerdotal ambition deem themselves interested. The Dissenters took fright at the composition of the boards of parish trustees, even though the larger proportion of them were to be elected by the ratepayers, of whom they boasted that they possessed a majority; and such was the clamour raised on the subject, and the multitude of petitions which flowed in from the efforts of the Dissenters against the measure, that Sir James Graham, with expressions of extreme regret, was obliged to withdraw, first the educational clauses, and at last the whole bill.

19. Next session Sir James Graham, taught by experience the extreme danger of meddling, in the most remote degree, even for the most salutary and beneficial purposes, with institutions which rouse sectarian jealousy or solicitude, introduced a bill which, without any educational clauses at all, professed simply and solely to limit the undue working of the operatives, whe-

ther male or female, in future. The fate of this bill was very singular, and strongly illustrative of the varying and antagonistic influences which had now come to bear on the House of Commons. When the bill was sent to the committee, Lord Ashley moved an amendment, by which the working hours of women and young persons under fourteen years of age were to be reduced from twelve to ten hours a-day. Sir James Graham opposed this with reluctance and pain, on the ground that the change was too violent; that the limiting the hours of women and children would necessarily draw after it that of adults also; and that thus the change would come to reduce the hours, and of course the produce, of labour in factories by a sixth, and put in hazard the subsistence of two millions of persons. There was some truth, but great exaggeration, in these statements, to which O'Connell lent the additional weight of his powerful voice, which declared, that if the amendment became law, "Manchester would become a tomb." Notwithstanding these sinister predictions, the amendment was carried by Lord Ashley in the Commons by a majority of *nine*, the numbers being 272 to 263. This was considered a serious defeat to Ministers, as the amendment had been opposed by their whole strength, and great efforts were accordingly made to get the vote rescinded. They succeeded in doing so by a majority of *seven* in a subsequent stage of the bill, when the House had, immediately before, by a majority of three, negatived the proposal of twelve hours. Government, seeing the House thus vacillating, hinted in no obscure terms that they would withdraw the bill. Lord Ashley upon this gave way, and moved the adoption of eleven hours in all cases, as a reasonable compromise, for three years, and ten hours after that time. After a long and interesting debate, the bill as amended was carried, the substitution of ten for eleven hours being rejected by a majority of 138. It was not seriously opposed in the House of Lords, and became law without any educational

clauses; affording a melancholy proof of the prevalence of sectarian over philanthropic views in the religious, and of considerations of gain over those of humanity, in the worldly portion of the community.

20. In reflecting on this important question, there is one consideration of paramount importance, to which the public are now only beginning to open their eyes, but without a due regard to which, all legislation on the subject will be evaded and become inoperative. This is, that such is the inversion of the feelings of nature which takes place in manufacturing and mining districts, and such the straits to which, from the vicissitudes of commerce, the persons engaged in them are reduced, that the worst enemies of children are often *their own parents*, and all attempts at general education are elusory, unless due provision is made to guard against the fatal precocity of labour. In agricultural pursuits, the severity and strength required in the toil is in general a sufficient protection to children against the oppression of infant labour; but in manufactories and collieries the case is different. Something can be extracted from the employment of the young even in their earliest years. From seven upwards the work of a child is worth something — often as much as four or five shillings a-week. No strength is required to watch a wheel, or pour out oil, or open a valve. *The workshop stands in fearful competition with the school.** Education in general is not wholly neglected, but it is given in so imperfect a manner, or to so small an extent, that it is of scarcely any benefit in life. The inevitable contagion of vice from the assemblage of numbers, the facilities afforded for the indulgence of precocious passion, by the young of both sexes being con-

* So general is the operation of this cause, that it has been ascertained by recent statistical researches, that in Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Bolton, and other manufacturing towns, the proportion of children at school to the entire population is only 4 or 5 per cent, or 1 in 20 or 25, whereas in Prussia it is 1 in 10; in Austria, 1 in 9; in Canada, 1 in 7.

stantly together, counteract all the incipient benefits of education. Hence the vast proportion of the criminals who turn out to be persons "imperfectly educated," and the astounding fact, that the persons convicted by a jury or summarily in England, are now a hundred and twenty thousand in a year, being about 1 in 150 of the population. Unless the employment of children in mines and manufactories is *absolutely prohibited below fourteen years of age*, all attempts to educate the manufacturing and mining population will prove, generally speaking, nugatory and useless.

21. The year 1843, however, was marked by a succession of riots in an entirely rural portion of Great Britain, which proved that the seeds of evil were not sown only in the manufacturing and mining districts, but that, unless local grievances were looked to and redressed, the country might become as disturbed in the agricultural, as it had ever been in the worst parts of Ireland. Loud complaints had long been made of the heavy tolls paid, especially on the cross-roads in South Wales, and the ruinous multitude of separate trusts, which rendered a ticket given on one line unavailing even within two hundred yards, if you turned off it. Such was the weight of these exactions, that they had come, in many places, to absorb nearly the whole profit of farmers in carrying their humble produce to market. These complaints, however, as is generally the case with the statement of grievances not supported by powerful Parliamentary influence which persuades, or violent popular resistance which intimidates, met with no attention, and the people secretly determined to take the matter into their own hands. In 1839 a set of gates peculiarly obnoxious had been pulled down by the people who suffered under them, and several of the county magistrates, by becoming trustees on the roads, had prevented their being again put up. The victory, as usual in all cases where popular will effects its object by illegal means, only led to fresh acts of violence. The people held meetings of persons suffering

under the exactions in remote and sequestered places at night, and organised a conspiracy of a very singular kind. They chose for their text the words of Scripture, "And they blessed Rebecca, and said unto her, Let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them." In pursuance of the plan agreed on, they elected a chief, dressed him in women's clothes, and set about the destruction of all the gates which they deemed objectionable, and the hindrance of their reconstruction. The work of destruction began in the winter 1842-43, and at first it was deemed rather a mischievous frolic than anything else; but ere long it assumed a more serious aspect. In the daytime everything was quiet and orderly in the extreme. The farmers paid their tolls regularly at all the gates without complaint, and work in the fields and villages went on as usual. But no sooner did darkness set in than bands of armed men began to traverse the roads and surround the obnoxious toll-bars. The loud sound of horns was heard on all sides, calling the peasantry, who were for the most part inclined to their side, to join in the work of destruction. The discharge of fire-arms and the sound of the horns announced their approach; in the twinkling of an eye the toll-house was surrounded by a crowd of men in male and female attire, the doors forced open, and the inmates led out or bound with cords. Immediately the building was unroofed, the walls levelled, the toll-bar destroyed, and nothing but a heap of ruins left to mark where it had stood. In the morning all was again quiet; the labourers were alone seen at work in the fields; carts, as usual, traversed the roads; and but for the crowds which collected with secret triumph round the scene of former devastation, no one could have suspected that anything unusual had occurred.

22. These disorders, as is usually the case when they break out in a rural district where no police force is established, or means are in existence either to prevent crime or arrest its perpetrators, for long went on unpunished. Large bodies of troops and police were

sent down from London to the disturbed districts, with several of the most skilled detectives of the metropolis. For long, however, the rioters, as often occurs in such cases, eluded the whole efforts of the magistrates, in consequence of the universal adherence of the peasantry to the cause, and the rapid intelligence which they sent to the bands of rioters of the approach of any body of military or police, which was instantly followed by their dispersion and flight. At length, however, matters came to such a point that even the sympathy of the peasantry was alienated from the insurgents. Incendiarism was committed in many places, murder in some. An old woman, aged seventy-two, was shot dead, while the roof of her cottage was blazing around her. These atrocities roused the indignation of the better part of the people, who ceased in consequence to lend their aid to the escape or screening of the culprits. Twice Rebecca's horse was shot dead under her, and though the rider escaped on foot, yet several of her followers were captured, and committed for trial. Government, now thoroughly alarmed, acted energetically. A proclamation was issued by the Queen, calling on the magistrates and all good subjects to do their duty, and a royal commission sent down for the trial of the prisoners, who had now become very numerous.

23. Baron Gurney, who presided over the commission, acted with equal humanity and discretion: his addresses to the prisoners drew tears from the eyes of all who heard them, from the intermixture they contained of the tenderness of a parent with the justice of a judge. Three of the worst were sentenced to long periods of transportation; the remainder, who were for the most part deluded peasants, escaped with various periods of imprisonment. The convicts issued an address to their countrymen recommending the cessation of rural disorders; the commission of inquiry, which was everywhere most favourably received, reported in favour of a general consolidation of the turnpike trusts through South Wales; and a bill passed both

houses of Parliament in the next session, founded on their recommendation.* Thus the Rebecca insurrection terminated in the entire success of the objects for which it was originally undertaken; and it leads to the melancholy reflection, that all the disorders and suffering consequent on it might have been avoided if the Government and Legislature had at once redressed the real injustice complained of, and paid that attention to *provincial* grievances at a distance from the seat of power, which they seldom fail to do to metropolitan, at its door.

24. Although the symptoms of amendment in several branches of manufacture were very apparent in the latter part of 1843, yet the general distress was still so great as to encourage both the Chartists and the Anti-Corn-Law League to continue in their respective spheres the agitation of the public mind. Such was the activity of the former class of agitators, that they prepared a petition, which was presented to the House of Commons, praying for the establishment of the six points of the Charter and the abolition of all monopolies, and which was said to contain 3,500,000 signatures! From

* There is no reform in domestic administration more loudly called for than a general consolidation of road trusts, at least in every county, so that a ticket given at one bar shall be available at any other bar within five miles. This would be attended with equal benefit to the public, the road trustees, and those who have advanced money for them, for it would diminish essentially the expense of management. In the county of Mid-Lancashire, where the produce of the tolls is £42,000 a-year, no less than £7000 annually has been saved by consolidating the trusts, while the public have obtained the great advantage of paying only one toll in five miles in any direction. Were a similar system adopted in the county of Lanark, it would probably, with a similar advantage to the community, effect a saving of £20,000 a-year; in that of York, of £80,000. The real obstacle to this great reform, as to most others, is the interested views of the surveyors and law agents on the several trusts, who would be affected by the change, and whose resistance to it has hitherto proved insurmountable from the influence they have acquired over the country gentlemen who nominally direct the affairs of the trusts. So powerful is this influence that it will probably never be overcome but by a general national movement, aided by the whole weight of Government.

the manner in which these petitions were at that time got up by the popular agitators, it is probable the real number of signatures was not half so great, but still the number was immense. It was brought to the door of the Legislature by a long procession of working men, and it required sixteen men to carry it into the House. Mr Duncombe, who presented it, asserted that, after deducting those of youths and females, the signatures of 1,300,000 heads of families were appended to the petition. It made a great sensation, and Sir James Graham, on the part of Government, admitted the reality and wide extent of the distress of which the petitioners complained. From the emphatic manner in which "monopolies" were denounced in the petition, it was evident that the Anti-Corn-Law agitators had got the direction of the movement, or that a coalition had been entered into between the two sets of agitation. This impression was increased by a mournful event which occurred in January 1843, when Mr Drummond, private secretary to Sir R. Peel, was murdered near the Salopian Coffee-house, in Parliament Street, by an assassin, who mistook him for Sir R. Peel. It was proved at the trial that he was insane, and he was sentenced to confinement for life; but in the meantime the obnoxious act excited a very great degree of consternation, from an apprehension that it was the work of one or other of the great combinations by which the country was now convulsed. To such a length did this feeling go, that a most vehement debate took place soon after in Parliament, in the course of which Sir R. Peel declared that he held Mr Cobden "formally responsible" for the misery of the people.

25. The distressed state of Great Britain ever since the monetary crisis of 1839, led, as it always does, to disputes with foreign powers, who sought to take advantage of our sufferings to advance pretensions, or make acquisitions at our expense for themselves. The Americans had never got over the check they had received in their attempts to revolutionise Canada during

the troubles of 1838; and, in particular, they retained a very sore recollection of the catastrophe of the *Caroline*, by which Sir Allan M'Nab had so signally defeated them. Matters were very near being brought to a crisis by the arrest of Mr M'Leod, a British subject, who was seized when transacting business in New York, on a charge of being implicated in that affair, and as the person who had slain one of the men who had perished on the occasion. The magistrates before whom he was brought were about to discharge the prisoner on bail, seeing the offence, if offence it was, had been committed on British territory; but a mob got up and prevented his liberation, and this led to a report of a committee of Congress, to whom the matter had been referred, so extremely hostile that it amounted to little short of a declaration of war. M'Leod, accordingly, was detained for trial, and this led to an unjustifiable incursion of some zealous Canadians into the American territory to get hold of a hostage for M'Leod, where they seized Colonel Grogan, an American subject, accused of incendiary acts in Canada. Fortunately M'Leod was able to bring such overwhelming evidence of an alibi that, after a very impartial charge from the judge, he was acquitted; and the wisdom of the British Government at once ordered the liberation of Grogan, so that the danger, which had been very great, passed away for the present.

26. The feelings of rancour on both sides, which these events had produced, did not, however, yet subside. A more serious cause of dispute soon after arose, founded on the right which the British Government claimed, and its cruisers exercised, of stopping American vessels, and searching them, with a view to ascertain whether they were British vessels carrying on the slave-trade under the American flag. This was quite a different right from that of searching neutral vessels during war to ascertain whether they were conveying articles contraband of war, so much the object of dispute during the revolutionary contest, and was grounded, not on an alleged right to search the Ame-

rican vessels *as neutrals*, but the right to examine whether or not they were British vessels engaged in an illegal traffic. The Americans, however, maintained that this right of mutual search applied only to states which had signed treaties permitting it to prevent the slave-trade, and that, as they were not parties to these treaties, they could not permit their vessels to be searched on the ground of looking for slaves, or on any other pretence. Lord Palmerston, on the other hand, while admitting that the Americans were no parties to these treaties, maintained that a right to stop American merchantmen, and call for production of their papers to see whether they were not British vessels carrying on the slave-trade in disguise, was indispensable to prevent that odious traffic being carried on to an unlimited extent under neutral flags. The discussion had gone on for some time, when the Whigs went out of office, and it then wore a very unpromising aspect; for the feelings of large bodies of men, the slaveowners in America on the one side, and the British emancipators on the other, were involved in the contest, and neither Government could venture openly to resist their demands. Matters, too, had been much complicated by an insurrection of some slaves on board the American brig *Creole*, which had sailed from New Orleans in October 1841. It proved successful, and ended in the slaves killing one man and wounding the captain, after which they brought the vessel to the British harbour of Nassau, in New Providence. The whole negroes, 133 in number, were liberated by the British authorities, under the directions of Government, upon the ground that every slave became free as soon as he touched the British soil, and that there was no law authorising the detention even of those charged with the mutiny and murder committed, not in the British dominions, but on the high seas.

27. The indignation of the Americans was loudly excited by this untoward event. The slave States of the Union immediately took fire; denunciations of piracy and abetting mur-

der were loudly hurled at the British Government, and blood and fire were openly threatened in return. But never was a truer maxim than that it requires the consent of two persons to make a quarrel. A soft word, a reasonable explanation, often turns aside wrath, and sometimes prevents the most serious wars that threaten to devastate the world. Lord Aberdeen, who had succeeded to the Foreign Office in September 1841, spared no pains to explain to the American Government the real nature of the right for which the British contended, and to soften the demand by the offer of reparation in all cases where injury had really been sustained, and a full exposition of the orders given to the British cruisers, which were of the most forbearing description. Fortunately for the peace of the world, these explanations, conceived in the most mild and conciliatory spirit, were met with similar dispositions on the part of the American Minister in London, Mr Stevenson, who laboured not less assiduously to explain to his Government the real nature of the British pretensions and the spirit of moderation by which their Cabinet was actuated. The result was an amicable adjustment of this most delicate and dangerous question, without any loss of character or honour on either side. The British Government disclaimed all right to stop or search American vessels *as such* during peace, or to do more than merely require production of their papers, to see whether or not they really belonged to the nation whose flag they bore, with a view to discovering whether they had slaves on board, and then only under such restrictions and responsibilities as effectually guarded against abuse; and the American admitted that "the apparent difference between the two Governments was one of definition rather than principle, and that a right to be exercised only under such restrictions can scarcely be considered as anything more than a privilege asked for and either conceded or withheld on the usual principles of international community." Thus was the question, once

so threatening, satisfactorily adjusted, and it was settled that ~~when~~ reasonable grounds existed for suspecting that the United States flag was used only as a pretence, the British cruisers might stop the vessel and demand production of the ship's papers, under the liability of making reparation for damage or delay, in the event of the vessel proving to be really American.*

28. Scarcely was this delicate question in this manner satisfactorily adjusted than a fresh and still more

"The undersigned renounces all pretension on the part of the British Government to visit and search American vessels in time of peace. Nor is it *as American* that such vessels are ever visited. But it has been the invariable practice of the British navy, and, as the undersigned believes, of all the navies in the world, to ascertain by visit the real nationality of merchant vessels met with on the high seas. In certain latitudes, and for a particular object, the vessels referred to are visited, not as American but rather as British vessels engaged in an unlawful traffic, and carrying the flag of the United States for a criminal purpose, or as belonging to states which have by treaty ceded the right of search to Great Britain, and which right it is attempted to defeat by fraudulently bearing the protecting flag of the Union, or finally as piratical outlaws, professing no claim to flag or nationality whatever. Should the vessel visited prove American, the undersigned adds with pain that, even though manacles, fetters, or instruments of torture, or even a number of slaves are found on board, the British officer could interfere no further."—*LORD ABERDEEN to MR STEVENSON, Sept. 14, 1841; Ann. Reg. 1842, 310, 311.*

"To seize and detain," said the American President in reply, "a ship upon suspicion of piracy, with probable cause and in good faith, affords no just ground either for complaint on the part of the nation whose flag she bears, or claim of indemnity on the part of the owner. *The universal law sanctions, and the common good requires, the existence of such a rule.* The right under such circumstances not only to visit and detain, but to search a ship, is a perfect right, and involves neither responsibility nor indemnity. But with this single exception, no nation has a right in time of peace to detain the ships of another upon the high seas on any pretext whatever beyond the limits of the territorial jurisdiction. And such, I am happy to find, is substantially the doctrine of Great Britain herself in her most recent official declarations, and even in those communicated to the House. The declarations may well lead us to doubt whether the apparent difference between the two Governments be not one rather of definition than of principle."—*President's Message to Congress, February 27, 1843; Ann. Reg. 1843, p. 318.*

serious cause of difference arose from the unsettled state of the Maine frontier. This arose from the ignorance which prevailed on both sides when the treaty recognising the independence of the United States by Great Britain was concluded in 1783, in regard to the geography of the wild and uninhabited district which lay between Canada and the adjoining provinces of America, and the little importance then attached to a line of demarcation through forests, which it was not then anticipated could ever come to be of value to either state. By degrees, however, this once solitary and secluded region began to be settled by the adventurous pioneers of civilisation on either side, and it became of the highest importance to ascertain to which they really belonged. The difficulty arose from the words in the treaty of 1783, which said that the frontier was to be "a ridge which divides the waters which flow into the St Lawrence from those which flow into the Atlantic." The Americans maintained that the Bay of Fundy was part of the Atlantic, and that the ridge here referred to was one running from the head of the St Croix northward to certain highlands, which in this way came to include the whole of the St John river. A map was referred to in this treaty, but it was not at first discovered, and the matter was submitted to arbitration in 1794, with power to choose an oversman by lot; and the lot having fallen to the Americans, he determined in favour of the American line. A map was published by Mr Tudors in 1783 in London, which adopted the American line, and another two years after which took the British line; and what is very singular, it came out afterwards that there was one map in the possession of the British Government which took the American line, and another in the possession of the American which adopted the British. In these circumstances there was abundant room for doubt and dispute on both sides; and the diplomatists on neither can be accused of bad faith, because they did not produce

the documents on either, which militated against the sides which they were respectively called on to espouse. But what seems to cast the balance in a decisive way in favour of the British line is the fact that there was discovered in the archives of the Foreign Office at Paris a letter by Dr Franklin, who concluded the treaty, to M. de Vergennes, then Minister of Foreign Affairs at Paris, in which he says, "I have traced what I take to be the line in Mr. Oswald's treaty" (that of 1783). A line was found in red ink in the map in possession of the American Government, which coincided with that contended for by the British; and coupling this fact with the expression in Franklin's letter, who drew the treaty and concluded it, there seems to be no doubt that this was the line intended on both sides by its authors.*

29. However this matter may stand as to the original merits of the dispute, nothing can be clearer than that it had become long after a fit subject of arbitration and compromise. The matter was referred, by mutual consent, to the King of Holland, and he gave an award, deciding two points in dispute in favour of the British, but not settling the third point, upon this ground, that there were not sufficient materials to determine what were "the highlands" mentioned in the treaty of 1783. Although this award brought the Americans much nearer the St Lawrence than was deemed consistent with the security of the British possessions in Canada, the British Government not only offered, but anxiously pressed, that the matter in dispute might be adjusted in terms of it; but the Americans refused to be bound by the award, alleging that the arbitrator was only empowered to

* "The map of Franklin," said Lord Campbell, "is, in my opinion, quite conclusive. If you assume that the map now known to be in existence was the map, as I believe it was, which was referred to in the letter of Dr Franklin, the negotiator of the treaty, to the Count de Vergennes, this was the very map on which the treaty was made; and after the production of that map before a jury of Englishmen, there would not be the slightest doubt as to what was the true boundary."—LORD CAMPBELL, *Parl. Deb.* lxxviii. 663.

decide in favour of one or other line, but not to divide the matter in dispute between them. Lord Palmerston, upon this, sent out two sets of commissioners,—one in 1839, to inquire into the merits of the line claimed by the British, and another in 1841, to do the same with that claimed by the Americans, and they both reported in favour of the British line. Matters were in this unsettled state, with the preponderance of evidence decidedly in favour of the claim advanced by England, when Sir R. Peel came into power in October 1841. He was in no condition to assert the pretensions of his Government by force of arms. Two bad harvests, combined with an erroneous monetary system, had landed the nation in a deficiency of income below expenditure of £4,000,000 yearly, including the cost of the Chinese and Afghanistan wars; and the naval and military establishments of the country, starved down to the very lowest point, were unable to meet any fresh requirements.* Compromise was, therefore, to him not only recommended by prudence, but dictated by necessity, and he adopted the most effectual means for bringing it about. He selected Lord Ashburton for a pacific mission—a nobleman of distinguished talents and most conciliatory manners, and who, lately elevated to the peerage, was still the head of one of the greatest mercantile houses in the world, and intimately acquainted, both from business connections and extensive information, with the state of public feeling in America. Under such auspices the matter was soon brought to a satisfactory issue. He left London in February 1842, and in August following concluded a treaty at Washington, which settled both the boundary question and the right of searching ships on the high seas in time of peace.

30. By this treaty, the Americans obtained about seven-twelfths of the disputed territory, and the British only five-twelfths. The former got the British settlement of Madawaska,

* The deficiency amounted, in the year 1842, to £3,979,539.—*Statistical Abstract*, No. 1, page 4.

the fortified position of Rouse's Point at the foot of Lake Champlain, and the free navigation of the river St. John; and their territory ran in a salient angle almost into the heart of Lower Canada, so as completely to cut the direct land-communication between that country and New Brunswick. On the other hand, they were, at some points, farther removed from the St. Lawrence than they had been by the King of Holland's award, and they were excluded from a series of heights, of importance in a military point of view, on the right or American side of that river. Upon the whole, the balance, both in point of extent and value of acquisition, was decidedly in favour of the Americans; and although there were many complaints, in the first instance, in the United States, yet, generally, the country was satisfied, and Lord Ashburton was splendidly fêted in his travels through it on his return home. The feeling in Great Britain was more mixed, and with many of a more painful description. All were agreed that it was a great blessing that peace had been preserved, and that the whole territory in dispute was not worth one half-year's cost of a war. But there were many who regretted the sacrifice, not so much of dominion as of character, by which the pacification had been purchased.* It was asked whether such a treaty would have been agreed to in the days of Chatham and Pitt—how a great nation was to preserve its position in the world, if it surrendered its possessions rather than draw the sword; and Lord Palmerston's happy sobriquet of "the Ashburton

* So early as 1826, Sir G. Carmichael Smyth thus pointed out what would be the results to this country of this loss of territory: "Ten thousand square miles of wild and uncultivated waste in the woods of America may, to many people, appear to be an object hardly worth disputing about. The country, however, in question, if given to the Americans, would bring them within a few miles of the St. Lawrence, 100 miles below Quebec; would prevent the communication by the St. John river between Lower Canada, New Brunswick, and Halifax; and would conduct an enemy, in time of war, on the back of New Brunswick and on the back of Lower Canada."—*Précis of the Wars in Canada*, pp. 210, 211.

capitulation" expressed so completely the general feeling, that it has come to designate the treaty ever since it was concluded.

31. But all this notwithstanding, there seems no doubt that Sir R. Peel and Lord Ashburton did right, *situated as they were*, in concluding the treaty. Granting all that Lord Palmerston said on the subject to be perfectly well founded, so far as the external character and influence of Great Britain were concerned, the question yet remained, whether, adverting to the internal situation of the country, it was then possible to have asserted the national honour in any more vigorous way. England had come, by pursuing the policy of looking only to the cheapest market for the purchase of the materials of its chief manufactures, to be dependent on the United States for five-sixths of the cottons which gave bread to the inhabitants of her chief manufacturing towns. She had established a system of currency which had rendered general credit and commercial industry of every kind entirely dependent on the retention of gold, and, in consequence of its large export to buy grain during the five preceding bad years, the whole commercial and manufacturing classes had come to be involved in the deepest distress. She had recently sustained an unparalleled disaster in Afghanistan, and had only just emerged from a costly war both in India and China. She had a military and naval force on so very reduced a scale, that not more than ten thousand men could have been collected, after providing for the necessary garrisons, to defend London, or ten sail of the line to assert the honour of the British flag in the Channel. In these circumstances, to have plunged into a fresh war with a considerable naval power, and the one from whom the materials for our chief manufactures were derived, would have been hazardous in the extreme, and might have induced dangers wholly disproportioned to any advantages to be derived from the contest.

32. Encouraged by the success with which the bold assertion of their claims

on the Maine frontier had been attended, the Americans next proceeded to adopt a similar policy on the other side of the Rocky Mountains. A vast district of country, called OREGON, there lay between that alpine barrier and the sea, of great importance from its natural fertility, its mineral riches, and the rich island of Vancouver, two hundred and fifty miles long, abounding with coal and noble forests, belonging to its territory. The command which it afforded of the Columbia river, the great stream which descended from its eastern frontier, and the destined channel of communication from the St Lawrence and the great chain of lakes to the Pacific Ocean, added much to its importance. So little was either the geography or importance of this immense region understood when the treaty with the United States, in 1783, was concluded, that, literally speaking, nothing was arranged at all regarding it. So unsettled was the matter, and so discordant the claims of the British Government and the United States on the subject, that Lord Castlereagh said to Mr Rush, the American Minister, in 1822, that, "by holding up a finger, war could at any time be produced about it." Such, however, were the American pretensions, and so warm the feelings excited on both sides, that it was with no small difficulty that that lamented statesman, and after him Mr Canning, prevented hostilities actually breaking out regarding it. Sensible of the danger of such a state of things, the two Governments, in 1818, entered into a convention, by which the whole Oregon territory was to be open to settlers from both countries for the period of ten years, and this state of promiscuous occupation was to continue for an indefinite period after. It was impossible, however, that this uncertain and precarious state could remain after the country began to be occupied by squatters, however few and far between; on either side. It was indispensable that they should know to whom they belonged, and to which Government they owed allegiance. This necessity became more

pressing when the increasing numbers and augmented spirit of adventure in the United States led to great numbers of the inhabitants of that country leaving their homes, and seeking new settlements in distant regions. In 1842 and 1843, whole crowds of these hardy pioneers of civilisation, impelled by the want and stagnation of enterprise, which General Jackson's crusade against the banks had produced in the United States, crossed the Rocky Mountains, and, armed only with their rifle, cartridge-belt, axe, and scrip, boldly settled in the desert wilderness. So strong did the passion for maintaining and extending these settlements become, that, in 1843, the President of the United States was constrained to give notice to the British Government, that he was about to put an end to the existing state of promiscuous possession—a determination which rendered it necessary to fix a boundary-line on this side also between the territories of the two Governments.

33. It was no easy matter to effect this object, for the passions of the Americans, now strongly excited, were hurrying them in great numbers to what they deemed the land of promise on the other side of the Rocky Mountains. Large caravans were formed which traversed the pathless prairies, found their way over the stony barrier, and descended into the boundless wastes which extended from its foot to the shores of the Pacific. It seemed, from the numbers which went, and the haste with which their journey was urged on, that they were desirous to forestall the British, and occupy the country in dispute in such numbers that any attempt to dislodge or transfer them would be impossible to either power. In a word, they were doing exactly the thing which, at the same time, they effected in Texas, which was to squat down in sufficient numbers on the territory, to render it worth while for the Union to incorporate it with their other States. By so doing they had, at one blow, wrested from the Spaniards a region of 350,000 square miles in extent, or more than twice the area of France. The language used

in the Legislature on the subject, especially in 1844 and 1845, was extremely violent, insomuch as to leave a pacific solution of the question apparently hopeless. To such a length did they go, that on 23d April 1846 the Congress passed a resolution that notice of the termination of the joint-occupancy should be sent to the British Government, and providing for the occupation of the Oregon territory. This bill was carried in the Senate by a majority of 42 to 10, and the House of Representatives by 142 to 46. Every one in both countries now expected that the next step would be an assertion of their right to the entire territory in dispute, and an appeal to arms for its support. Fortunately, however, for the peace of the world, the Government of the United States was guided by more pacific views, and the treasury had not sufficiently recovered the terrible monetary crisis produced by General Jackson's crusade against the banks, to render it advisable to engage in a fresh war, which would immediately lead to the destruction of their foreign trade, and ruin of the large revenue they derived from the import duties, at the very time when they had just declared war against the republic of Mexico. Lord Aberdeen sent out a proposal for a compromise, which was approved of by a large majority in the Senate, and accepted by the President, Mr Rusk.

34. By this treaty, concluded on the 17th June 1846, which arranged the respective claims of the parties on a very equitable footing, the territory on the continent was divided between the parties in such a way as to give the larger portion to the United States. The line stretched "along the 49th parallel of north latitude to the middle of the channel which separates the

thence southerly through the middle of the said channel and of Fuca Strait, to the Pacific Ocean, provided that the navigation of the whole of the said channel and straits south of the 49th parallel of north latitude shall remain free and open to both parties. From the point which the 49th parallel of

north latitude shall be found to intersect the great northern branch of the Columbia river, the navigation of the said branch shall be open to the Hudson Bay Company, and British subjects trading with the same, to the point where the said branch meets the main stream of the Columbia, and thence down the said main stream to the ocean." By this arrangement the whole of Vancouver Island, a possession of great importance, remained to Great Britain. It enjoys a temperate climate, not unlike that of the British Islands; and from the valuable seams of coal and magnificent forests which it contains, must ultimately come to be a possession of very great value. So closely joined are the British and American territories on the other side of the Rocky Mountains, and so much separated from all the rest of the world, that the celebrated American statesman, Mr Webster, has declared his conviction, that ere long their inhabitants would detach themselves from both states, and set up an independent republic of their own on the shores of the Pacific.

35. These treaties, conducted with such difficulties, between Great Britain and the United States, are worthy of remark, as indicating the advent of the period when the American population was bursting the limits of its territories, wide as they were, and pouring over mighty streams into the adjoining states. So strong was this disposition, that it was with difficulty that the neighbouring Governments withstood the pressure; and it was only by the accidental circumstance of the largest portion of the flood breaking into Texas, that the whole of Oregon was prevented from being overwhelmed. This is a very singular circumstance, especially when the stationary condition of the French population in Lower Canada is taken into consideration. It adds another to the many proofs with which history abounds, that republican states, so far from being the most pacific, are the most warlike and aggressive of all nations; and that the *multis utile bellum* is in them a stronger provocative

to conquest than either the ambition of kings or the rivalry of ministers. It points distinctly to democratic institutions as the great *expelling force* which drives civilised man from his native seats, and fills the wilderness of nature with hardy settlers, the destined fathers of mighty nations. But it is calculated not less strongly to evince how peculiarly these qualities are developed in the Anglo-Saxon more than any other race of mankind, and how admirably adapted their disposition, at once nomad and agricultural, is to their destined mission of clearing and peopling the vast forests which overspread the surface of the New World.

36. America was not the only quarter in which, during the administration of Sir R. Peel, the British empire was threatened with hostility. It was on the very verge also of a war with France, and strange to say, the cause of discord was not any jealousy or ambitious projects of either power in Europe, but a contest for the protectorate of the distant island of Otaheite in the Pacific Ocean. To understand how this came about, it is necessary to premise that the beautiful island of Otaheite, so well known to British readers from Cook's Voyages, had of late years been visited by the English missionaries, and its inhabitants had readily and sincerely, in form at least, embraced the Protestant faith. So rapid had been the spread of the Christian religion among the simple islanders of the Pacific, that the most sanguine hopes were entertained by the ardent enthusiasts in England, that the entire conversion of the South Sea Islands would follow its establishment in the group of islands which surrounded Otaheite. The queen of that island, named Pomare, had embraced Christianity, and was a pupil of the missionaries. Sensible of the weakness of her little kingdom, she was very desirous of being taken under the protection of Great Britain, or, as she expressed it, "to be allowed to sit under their flag." She accordingly made an application to George IV., in 1825, praying "that he would not

abandon them, but regard them with kindness for ever." Lord Palmerston, however, who was Foreign Minister when the application arrived, aware of the embarrassment which the protectorate of so distant and feeble a state might occasion, declined the proffered honour, though with every expression of friendship and regard for Queen Pomare and her subjects.

37. Meanwhile the French Roman Catholic missionaries, not less anxious than the English for the spread of their own faith, had also fixed upon Otaheite as the centre of their operations in the South Sea; and it was the rival pretensions of the missionaries of these two opposite creeds which embroiled the two countries, and had so nearly involved them in war. The Catholic missionaries, it would appear, had been hurried away by their zeal to carry matters too far, for in 1836 Queen Pomare sent a letter through Mr Pritchard, the British consul at Otaheite, requesting to know "whether the Roman Catholic missionaries who belonged to France, and persisted in coming to Otaheite and disturbing the peace of our Government, had the sanction of the British Government?" Lord Palmerston prudently replied that, as Otaheite was an independent state, the Queen of England could not in any manner interfere with the residence of foreigners in a territory which did not belong to her. The French, however, were not so easily got quit of; for they had formed, or were desirous of forming, a settlement in some of the adjoining islands, forming part of the Marquesas cluster, for the double purpose of establishing a harbour of refuge for their commercial vessels engaged in the South Sea fishery, and of founding a convict colony which might serve as a receptacle for part of the criminals with which their prisons in France were overcharged. They naturally desired to procure for that country some of the advantages which England had so long enjoyed from her penal settlements in New South Wales. The French authorities in this island complained that some outrages had been committed on two of their mission-

aries, Messrs Laval and Cazet, who had been in Otaheite for the purpose of weaning over the natives from the Protestant to the Catholic faith, and this was made a ground by Admiral Dupetit-Thouars, the French commander on the station, for demanding reparation. Accordingly, on the 30th August 1838, he appeared off the island in the frigate *Venus*, having a body of land-troops on board, and demanded, in the most summary way, that a letter of apology should be written by the Queen to the French Government, the sum of 2000 dollars paid to the persons injured, and *the French colours hoisted on the island*, and saluted with 21 guns on the 1st September. Being in no situation to resist this demand, Queen Pomare entered into a convention, in virtue of which all Frenchmen of every profession were to be allowed to establish themselves and trade freely in every part of her dominions.

38. This convention, however, satisfied neither party. The presence of the French was so obnoxious to Queen Pomare, or her advisers, that in November of the same year she addressed another letter to Lord Palmerston praying for the protection of the British Government. "Let," said she, "your flag cover us, and your lion defend us; determine the form in which we may shelter ourselves lawfully under your wings." In September 1839, Lord Palmerston returned an answer, which expressed concern for the difficulties which beset Queen Pomare, but declined to enter into an alliance, as "it would be impossible for her Britannic Majesty to fulfil with proper punctuality the defensive obligation which such a treaty would imply." The consequence was that the Queen, deprived of all aid from England, and unable to resist the hostile force with which she was threatened, was constrained to enter into a convention, in virtue of which the flag of Otaheite was lowered, and that of France hoisted in its room. This formal act of possession took place on 9th September 1842, and was regularly notified to the British Government.

The instructions to Admiral Thouars had been to occupy the Marquesas Islands, but not Otaheite, so that this taking possession was unauthorised; but the French Cabinet, deeming the national honour involved in supporting the act of their naval lieutenants, did not hesitate to ratify the protectorate, though they disavowed the assumed sovereignty.

39. As it was only a protectorate, not an absolute dominion, which the French Government ratified in Otaheite, they engaged to respect the British missions; and although the British rulers felt some jealousy at this assumption of their ancient rivals in a country which had long been on friendly terms with them, yet the moderation of the two Cabinets prevented any collision, and promised a pacific solution of the question. But difficult are all attempts of governments to preserve the peace of the world when that worst element of discord, religious zeal, has roused the passions of the people. From an island which slept in peace on the placid waters of the Pacific, and the ministers of a faith which inculcated universal charity, arose a tempest which had well-nigh spread over the world. The Catholic and Protestant missionaries in Otaheite made the most strenuous efforts mutually to supplant each other in the affections of the natives, and both, animated with a zeal at once ardent and sincere, strove to establish their respective faiths by the ruin of their opponents'. These feelings on both sides could hardly fail, ere long, to lead to a collision; and it occurred under circumstances which threatened the most serious results. An English missionary, Mr Pritchard, had become consul in the island; and although he had resigned his office when the French protectorate was established, his resignation had not been accepted, and he still *ad interim* held the office. He was very obnoxious to the French authorities on account of his zeal and influence with the natives, who had contracted a strong aversion to their Gallic masters; and a French sentinel having been disarmed by the natives,

on the night of the 2d March 1844, it was made a pretext for seizing and imprisoning Mr Pritchard "in reprisal." He was released only on condition of his instantly leaving the Pacific. This he accordingly did, without seeing his family, and reached London by the way of Valparaiso. Matters now looked very serious, for the dignity of England had been outraged in the person of its accredited consul; and that of France seemed not less implicated in maintaining what had been done. Warm feelings were excited and expressed on both sides when the intelligence reached the two countries; and Sir R. Peel declared in Parliament, on 31st July 1844, "that the account was scarcely credible, so impossible did it seem that such an outrage could be offered under the circumstances; but that the reply of the French Government to the remonstrances of England would soon arrive, when it would doubtless appear they would be as ready to disavow this act as that of dethroning Queen Pomare."

40. Fortunately there were at the head of the foreign affairs of the two Governments, at this moment, two men who, equally alive to the honour of their country, were yet not less impressed with the paramount importance of preserving peace between them, and who felt that each had succeeded to such an inheritance of historic glory that it could afford to listen only to the dictates of reason and justice. M. Guizot was sensible that the French officer concerned in the affair had overstepped due bounds in the removal of Mr Pritchard, and agreed to make him reparation, the amount of which was to be referred to the British and French Admirals on the station; and Lord Aberdeen consented to accept this reparation without insisting for the dismissal of the officer who had given orders for his seizure. The right of dominion over Otaheite, at first asserted by Admiral Dupetit-Thouars, had been disclaimed by the French Government, and the more modest title of Protectorate alone assumed. Thus was this delicate and dangerous affair

adjusted by mutual moderation and good sense, without any injury to the honour of either party; and M. Guizot, in announcing it to the Chamber of Deputies, expressed in noble and generous terms the principles by which the Governments of both had been actuated. "The good understanding which now subsists between the two Governments has been called an *entente cordiale*; friendship, alliance. Gentlemen, it is so; but it is something more novel, more rare, more great, than all that. There are now in France and England two Governments, who believe that there is room in the world for the prosperity and the material and moral activity of both countries; who do not think that they are obliged to regret, deplore, or fear, their mutual progress; and who are satisfied that they may, by the full development of their forces of every kind, aid instead of injuring each other. And the two Governments who believe that it is possible to do this, believe also that it is their duty to do it—that they owe it alike to the honour and the good of their country, to the peace and the civilisation of the world. And that which they mutually believe possible they have actually done; they have reduced their ideas to practice, and they have evinced on every occasion a mutual respect for rights, a mutual attention to interests, a mutual trust in intentions and words. This is what they have done; and thence it is that incidents the most delicate, events the most grave, are accommodated without producing either a rupture or even a coldness in the relations of the two countries." Noble words! betokening the rise of that spirit, founded on mutual respect and admiration, which led these two ancient rivals to stand side by side on the fields of Alma and Inkermann.

41. Negotiations of the highest importance took place between Great Britain and France at this period, regarding the Spanish marriages and succession; but they will come to be narrated with more propriety in the history of the latter country during the same time, as they had a material

influence on its future fortunes, and determined in some degree the ultimate fate of Louis Philippe.

42. The reviving prosperity of the country, in consequence of the cessation of the great import of grain, and increased issue of notes in 1843 and 1844, had so raised the price of stocks as enabled the Chancellor of the Exchequer to bring forward a bill, in March 1844, for the further reduction of the whole public funds excepting the 3 per cents. The $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cents, which composed £250,000,000 out of the £760,000,000 which formed the public debt, had stood in the beginning of the year at $102\frac{1}{2}$, and of course a fair opportunity was presented of paying them off at par. Mr Goulburn was not slow in taking advantage of this auspicious state of things; and he brought forward, on 8th March, a proposal for the conversion of the $3\frac{1}{2}$ into, first, $3\frac{1}{4}$, and ultimately 3 per cents. The first reduction was to take place immediately, the last in ten years. By this means he calculated that he could effect a saving at once of £625,000 a-year, and in 1854 of £1,250,000. As this reduction was accompanied with an offer to pay off the dissentients at par, it involved no breach whatever of the public faith, and was received in the most favourable manner by both sides of the House, and the public generally. The result fully justified the Chancellor's expectations, for the debt held by the dissentients was a perfect trifle, only £200,000, and was immediately paid off. The success of this measure, whereby the old 5 and 4 per cents were at length, as in October 1854, reduced to 3 per cent, afforded the clearest demonstration of the erroneous principle on which Mr Pitt originally proceeded in borrowing so large a proportion of the public debt in the 3 per cents instead of the 5 or 4 per cents; for if the latter system had been universally adopted, the saving effected on the interest of the public debt, which at this time was £760,000,000 in round numbers, would have been, between 1815 and 1854, no less than two-fifths of the entire interest, or above £10,000,000 a-year.

43. The financial statement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer next day, exhibited an equally flattering appearance, which was hailed with the more satisfaction by the nation, that it was the first time during a long and dreary course of years that such a prospect had been presented to the public. The estimated revenue had been £50,150,000, the actual receipts were £52,835,000, showing an increase above the estimates of no less than £2,685,000. This was in itself gratifying, and the more so from its exhibiting such a contrast to what the budget had presented for many years past. But it became doubly so when the several items were taken into consideration, for they indicated, in an unmistakable manner, a remarkable increase in the comfort of all classes. The estimate of the property-tax had been £5,100,000; it produced £5,326,000. The duties on tea had produced £300,000 in excess, those on wine £350,000, those on sugar £200,000. The customs, estimated at £19,000,000, had realised £21,426,000. On the other hand, the expenditure had fallen short of the estimate by £650,000; and the East India Company had made a large payment out of the moneys received by the treaty with China, to be afterwards narrated. Altogether the surplus of the present year, ending 5th April 1844, had been £4,165,000; an amount so large as enabled the Chancellor of the Exchequer not only to pay off the deficiency, amounting to £2,749,000, of last year, but to realise a net surplus of £1,400,000 for the present year.

44. With whatever satisfaction this unwaited financial statement was received by the country, it was very far from proving a source of quiet to the Chancellor of the Exchequer; for no sooner was the announcement of a surplus so considerable made public, than he was assailed by a perfect host of petitioners, each praying that the duties immediately affecting themselves should be taken off; while the class affected by the income-tax loudly clamoured that that heavy burden should be removed, as the war, which alone had been put

forward as a ground for its imposition, had come to a conclusion both in India and China. Sir R. Peel, however, adhered to his principle of retaining the direct taxation, and remitting only the indirect taxes on such articles as were deemed advisable. Those selected for relief were glass, vinegar, currants, coffee, marine insurances, and wool. The entire amount of taxes reduced was only £387,000. This was loudly complained of by Mr Hume, who insisted that Government should forthwith make a large reduction in the army and navy, by which they would be able to remit taxation to ten times the amount of that proposed. But to this demand the Prime Minister made the following satisfactory answer: "When honourable members tell us that we ought to do away with the income-tax, I request them to consider what has occurred since 1835. These things have occurred. There has been a rebellion in Canada, hostilities in Syria, a terrible disaster in India, and a war in China. Let us not be told, then, that we ought to reduce, or that we can reduce, the income-tax. It is very easy to talk of making reductions, but the difficulty is to show that, in the end, those reductions will consist with true economy or the maintenance of the national independence."

45. The duties on sugar were made the subject of a separate debate of great interest, as affording demonstrative evidence of the effect which, after a trial of six years, the emancipation of the negroes had produced on the productive industry of the once splendid West Indian colonies. It was stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in Parliament, that, before the Emancipation Bill, the West Indies had produced sugar enough for the consumption of this country, and about a third more which was exported, which had the effect of keeping down the price of the whole to the level which that surplus could command in the market of Europe. When emancipation, however, took place, it was foreseen that the supply would be considerably diminished, and to meet that probable event Parliament brought the duties

on East and West India sugar nearer to a level. Experience had proved, however, that this change was not equal to the exigencies of the case, especially as the improved condition of the people in Great Britain, and our altered relations with China, rendered it probable that an increased consumption of sugar to mix with tea would take place. For this purpose he proposed that, after the 10th of November next, free-grown sugar of China, Java, Manilla, or any other which her Majesty, by order in council, might certify to be not slave-grown sugar, should be admitted at £1, 14s. per cwt., with five per cent additional, being 10s. more than the duty of 24s. on West India sugar. To this proposal the House cordially agreed, the necessity of the case, from the diminution of West India sugar, being apparent to all. Indeed, so strongly was it felt, that Lord John Russell moved an amendment that *slave-grown* sugar should be admitted to supply the deficiency of the West Indies, which was only negatived by a majority of 69, the numbers being 197 to 128. Thus was the first step in advance made to free trade in sugar; but it was an ominous circumstance that the House divided on the admission of slave-grown sugar on the same terms as that of free labour, and a strange one that the amendment to that effect was proposed by the leader of the Liberal party in the House of Commons. A subsequent amendment, moved by Mr Miles, on behalf of the West India proprietors, that the duty on British colonial sugar, whether from the East or West Indies, should be lowered to 20s., and the foreign left at 34s., was negatived only by a majority of 22 in committee, after it had been carried by a small majority against Ministers in the House itself.

46. But all the measures of this session sink into insignificance compared with the all-important one of the BANK CHARTER ACT, which came on during its continuance, and produced more immediate and important effects on the country than any other measure recorded in British annals.

At the last granting of the exclusive privileges to the Bank in 1833, it had been provided that it was to last for twenty-one years, with a power of modification by Parliament at the end of ten years, if Government should be so inclined. Sir R. Peel resolved to take advantage of this permissive clause to place the issue of paper, whether by the Bank of England or country banks, under additional restrictions. The object of this was to prevent, so far as possible, the recurrence of such terrible calamities as the nation had undergone in consequence of the fever of speculation in 1835 and 1836, followed by the crises of 1839 and subsequent years, and at once check rash speculation at one time, and undue suspension at another. In this opinion the country generally concurred; for the recollection of the distress recently experienced, and which every one saw was owing to something wrong with the currency, was too vivid not to inspire an almost universal wish that some remedy could be discovered for such multifarious and often-recurring calamities. The only parties that took the alarm were the country bankers and their immediate dependents, who were apprehensive that the power of issuing notes, the great source of their profits, would be taken from them; and they issued several pamphlets on the subject, some of which went through several editions, and made a very considerable impression. Sir R. Peel, however, was too wary a leader to run directly athwart so powerful a body as the country bankers; on the contrary, he framed his measure in such a manner as ere long secured their general support. The subject was introduced by him in a long and lucid speech of three hours' duration, which was listened to with profound attention on both sides of the House, and never certainly was a subject of more vital importance brought under the consideration of Parliament.

47. "In legislating on this subject," said Sir R. Peel, "it is first necessary to consider what is the great principle which governs the measure of value—

what really constitutes the 'pound'—a point upon which there is not a uniformity of opinion. Some say it is a mere visionary abstraction or measure of value, as a foot or a yard is of distance. I cannot accede to that opinion. In my opinion, it means, and can only mean, a certain weight of precious metal of a certain fineness; and the engagement of the makers of a promissory note is to pay on demand a definite quantity of that metal and fineness. This was just the state of matters prior to 1797, when bank paper became issuable without convertibility into metal. The reason why an ounce of gold costs £3, 17s. 10½d. is, that that is the proportion which that metal bears to silver; and if you mean a certain advantage to debtors, you should give a direct discount, and not attempt indirectly to do the same thing, by saying, as some propose to do, that it is worth £5.* In a word, gold is the only safe foundation for the currency; and although the necessities of commerce may require that a paper circulation should be mixed with it, yet the currency can never rest on a proper foundation unless the one is convertible into the other.

48. "I propose, therefore, with respect to the Bank of England, that there should be a separation of the two departments of issue and of banking, that there should be a distinct set of offices for each, and a different system of accounts. I likewise propose, that to the issue department should be transferred the whole amount of bullion now in the possession of the

* "According to the regulations of the Mint before the alteration of the silver coin in 1816, a pound weight of standard gold was coined into 44½ guineas, a pound weight of standard silver was coined into 62s., and a guinea was made current for 21s. We are thus enabled to calculate the relative value of gold and silver according to the Mint regulations. The sum of 44½ guineas in gold was equivalent to 1809 sixpences in silver; and the pound of silver being equal to 124 sixpences in coin, the value of gold was to that of silver as 1809 to 124, or as 15½ to 1. The ounce of gold in coin was equivalent to the corresponding amount in silver—namely, the twelfth part of 1809 sixpences, or £3, 17s. 10½d."—SIR ROBERT PEEL'S *Speech of May 6, 1844; Parl. Deb.*, lxxiv. p. 727.

Bank, and that the issue of notes should hereafter take place on two foundations, and two foundations only; first on a definite amount of securities, and after that exclusively upon bullion; so that the action of the public would, in this latter respect, govern the amount of the circulation. There will be no power in the Bank to issue notes on deposits and discount of bills; and the issue department will have to place to the credit of the banking department the amount of notes which by law the issue department will be entitled to issue. The banking business of the Bank, I propose, should be governed on precisely the same principles as would regulate any other body dealing with Bank of England notes. The fixed amount of securities on which I propose that the Bank of England should issue notes, is £14,000,000, and the whole remainder of the circulation is to be issued *exclusively on the foundation of bullion*. I propose that there should be a complete and periodical publication of the accounts of the Bank of England, both in the banking and issue departments, as tending to increase the credit of the Bank, and prevent panic and needless alarm.

49. "With respect to private banks, I propose that the general principle is to be a distinction between the privilege of issue and the conduct of banking business, the object being to limit competition, but to make the great change with as little detriment as possible to private interests. To effect this object from the date of the Act, no new bank of issue will be allowed to be constituted; but all the existing banks will be allowed to continue their issues, *upon condition that they do not exceed their present amount*, to be calculated on an average of the last ten years. While the issues are to be restricted, business will be facilitated. The privilege of suing and being sued in the name of the office-bearers will be accorded, the power of an authorised partner to bind the whole in relation to the banking business recognised, and no new bank allowed to be established but upon application to Government, and proper registration

of prospective and paid-up shares and capital. All banks are to be obliged to publish a full and periodical list of all partners and directors, and banks of issue to publish an account of their issues. The Bank of England will be allowed to extend its issues on securities beyond the £14,000,000 on emergency, but only with the assent of three members of the Government; and in that case the whole of the net profit on issues beyond the £14,000,000 is to revert to the Exchequer. The 'legal tender clause,' making Bank of England notes a legal tender everywhere but at the Bank of England, is to be continued, as tending to facilitate the circulation of Bank paper. The Bank of England shall be bound to buy all the gold brought in, at a trifle below the present price.

50. "By these means the circulation of the whole of England issuing on securities will be about £22,000,000, £8,000,000 being the proportion of the country banks to £14,000,000 of the Bank of England. The circulation of the country, however, is, and requires to be, £30,000,000, and it is the additional £8,000,000 that requires to be provided for. This portion of our currency must be based on gold, for it is the portion required for foreign commerce, in which national securities are of no avail. The gold wanted for this portion of our commerce *may be assumed to be at the utmost* £8,000,000; for before anything like that quantity could have been drained out of the country, prices must have fallen so low as to have caused a large exportation of goods and return of gold. As the provision of this Act is, that gold is always to be in store beyond the £22,000,000 based on national securities, there can be no fluctuation in the amount of paper money otherwise than in proportion to the amount of gold brought for sale to the Bank of England; and as the Bank is obliged to buy with its notes all the gold brought to it, the gold bought in will be surely replaced by an equal amount of paper. When gold, on the other hand, is drawn out, the paper that comes in will be cancelled—a ne-

cessity, as the Bank has hitherto immediately re-issued the notes brought in, thus increasing the drain upon itself, at the very moment when a severe drain has set in of itself." *

51. Such were the views entertained

* Sir R. Peel's resolutions were in these terms, which contain an able summary of his views on the subject:—

"I. That it is expedient to continue to the Bank of England, for a time to be limited, certain of the privileges now by law given to that corporation, subject to such conditions as may be provided or by any Act to be passed for that purpose.

"II. That it is expedient to provide by law that the Bank of England should henceforth be divided into two separate departments, one exclusively confined to the issue and circulation of notes, the other to the conduct of the banking business.

"III. That it is expedient to limit the amount of securities upon which it shall be henceforth lawful for the Bank of England to issue notes payable to the bearer on demand; and that such amount shall only be increased under certain conditions, to be prescribed by law.

"IV. That it is expedient to provide by law, that a weekly publication should be made by the Bank of England of the state both of the circulation and of the banking departments.

"V. That it is expedient to repeal the law which subjects the notes of the Bank of England to the payment of the composition for stamp duty.

"VI. That, in consideration of the privileges to be continued to the Bank of England, the rate of fixed annual payment to be made by the Bank to the public shall be £180,000 per annum.*

"VII. That, in the event of any increase of the securities upon which it shall be lawful to issue such promissory notes as aforesaid, a further annual payment shall be made by the Bank of England to the public, over and above the £180,000, equal to the net profit thereon arising.

"VIII. That it is expedient to provide by law that such banks of issue in England and Wales as now issue promissory notes payable to bearer, shall continue to issue such notes, subject to such limitation as may be provided for that purpose.

"IX. That it is expedient to prohibit by law the issuing of any notes payable to bearer by any bank not now issuing such notes, or by any bank to be hereafter established in any part of the United Kingdom.

"X. That it is expedient to provide by law for the weekly production of the amount of promissory notes payable to bearer on demand, circulated by any bank authorised to issue such notes.

"XI. That it is expedient to make further provision by law for the regulation of joint-stock banking companies."—*Parl. Deb.*, lxxiv. p. 755; *Ann. Reg.* 1844, p. 196.

by Sir R. Peel and the great majority in both Houses of Parliament, which agreed with him on this all-important subject, and such the arguments by which their views were supported. So general was the concurrence in these principles, that no one ventured to oppose them in either House on general grounds, and the second reading passed without a division. The only serious opposition which showed itself was to that portion of the bill which went to affect the interests of the country bankers, and the restrictions about to be imposed on their issues. Mr Hawes was the exponent of their views, and he moved an amendment on the 13th June to the effect, "That no sufficient evidence has been laid before this House to justify the proposed interference with banks of issue in the management of their issues." "The object," said he, "of the present bill, is to make the paper circulation conform more closely to the gold circulation, which is declared to be prevented by the unlimited competition in the issue of paper. I deny that unlimited competition; for the convertibility of each note into gold at the will of the holder, is a natural and sufficient check on an over-issue of paper. There is no foundation for the doctrine advanced by the Bullion Committee, that the difference between the Mint and the market price of gold is the measure of the depreciation of the currency. That difference is entirely owing to the political causes which create a greater demand for gold, and therefore render it more valuable, in one part of the world than another. It is a mere gratuitous assumption, wholly unsupported either by reason or evidence, to say that the difference is owing to over-issues. As little is the rise of prices during the war to be ascribed to that cause. On the contrary, England was in many articles, especially sugar and colonial produce, the cheapest country in the world at the very time when the market price of gold was 25 per cent above the Mint price.

52. "The effect of the Government plan will be to substitute small bills

of exchange for promissory-notes, thus establishing a currency more easy of issue and more dangerous than that which now exists, while any commercial crisis pressing upon securities will compel the Bank to draw in its notes by whatever means and at whatever ruin to private credit, and thus lead to commercial difficulties unprecedented even in 1825 and 1839. A drain of bullion like that produced by the bad harvests of 1838 and 1839, might close the banking department of the Bank, and lead to such distress as would force on the repeal of the Corn Laws. If all restrictions were removed on the issue of paper, save the one important one of its being convertible into gold, no banker could commit an over-issue, for it would come back upon him instantly if it exceeded the wants of the country. The notes in circulation now are little more than half of what they were some years ago, and no proof whatever has been adduced to justify the proposed restrictions. It is the most palpable injustice to lay the whole blame of over-issue on the private bankers, and restrict them in future to their present amount of issue, without saying anything of the Bank of England, with whom the system of over-issue always began."

53. Upon this debate, which went only to a subordinate part of the bill, and left untouched its leading principles, the majority for the Government was 155, the numbers being 185 to 30. A few small alterations in detail were afterwards adopted, but an attempt on the part of Mr Muntz, the member for Birmingham, to throw it out on the third reading was defeated by a still larger majority, the numbers then being 205 to 18. In the House of Lords the bill excited very little discussion, and passed on 12th July without a division; so little was its paramount importance to all classes of the community understood in either House, save by its immediate authors and promoters. It received the royal assent on the 19th of the same month.

54. In announcing his measure regarding the currency, which extended only to England, Sir R. Peel declared

his intention of introducing, in the next session of Parliament, a similar measure applicable to Scotland and Ireland. Early in the session of 1845 he proceeded to redeem his pledge, and the country was at that period eminently prosperous; and as no bad effects had as yet been experienced, so far as present appearances went, from the bill of the preceding year relating to England, the bill passed with very little discussion and scarcely any opposition. Sir R. Peel boasted, and apparently with reason, in bringing it forward, that "thus far experience was in favour of that Act; there had since been a period of extraordinary commercial activity and speculation, especially in manufactures and railways, and a great demand for capital; and the amount of gold and silver in the Bank of England was now £15,842,000." In pursuance of the principle of the English Act, it was proposed to withdraw all the present exclusive privileges enjoyed by the Bank of Ireland, and to oblige that bank, like all the other banks of issue in the country, to make weekly returns of the state of its business. In Ireland, equally as in Scotland, the power at present enjoyed by the banks issuing notes was to be continued to them even below £5; but the amount to be issued by them was in future to be limited, so far as issuing on securities went, to the average of their note circulation for thirteen lunar months since 27th April 1844. Any excess of issue beyond these sums would require in both countries to be based on bullion. No bank established after the date of this Act was to have the power of issuing notes; and Bank of England notes were declared *not* a legal tender in Scotland. The amount of notes which under this Act might be issued on securities in Scotland would be £3,041,000, and in Ireland £6,271,000; the whole circulation beyond which was to be based on bullion. Thus was Sir R. Peel's banking system finally established with almost universal concurrence in both islands, and the amount of circulation in the two, taken together, that might be issued on securities, was fixed

at somewhat above £31,000,000, being little more than a *half* of what it had been at the close of the war.*

55. It is difficult to say whether what was said or what was left unsaid, in these all-important debates on the currency, which ended in the entire establishment of Sir R. Peel's system, is *the more calculated* to awaken surprise and suggest reflection. The avowed object of the system was to check undue extension of the circulation, in periods of speculation and excitement, by the over-issue of bankers, and to provide a solid basis for any extension of the currency beyond what was deemed reasonable, by compelling it to be based, whether issued by the Bank of England or private bankers, on bullion alone. To effect this object, it was deemed essential to compel the Bank of England to take all the gold which might be brought to it at a trifle below the Mint price; forgetting that if the precious metals came to flow on in abundance into the country, and no extraordinary drain existed from foreign wars or domestic deficiency of harvest to cause it to flow abroad, *it would all be brought to the Bank of England*, which would thus be forced to issue a corresponding amount of notes, and could only indemnify itself for the large amount of bullion thus kept in dead stock at its expense in its cellars, by forcing its business in every direction. Thus, to a certainty, an immense amount of notes would come to be issued by the Bank of England, and of course all other banks, at the very moment when

* The Notes now issuable on Securities in the British empire were:—

Bank of England,	£14,000,000
English country banks,	8,000,000
Bank of Ireland,	3,708,000
Irish country banks,	2,565,000
Scotch banks,	3,041,000
	£31,312,000

In 1815 the Notes in circulation on Securities were:—

Bank of England,	£27,261,000
English country banks,	19,010,000
Scotch and Irish banks (estimated),	12,500,000
	£58,771,000

—Ann. Reg. 1845, p. 204.

it was least required, and most perilous in consequence of a large influx of the precious metal at any rate taking place into this country.

56. If what was said in support of the measure was surprising, what was left unsaid was still more extraordinary. It was not said that the currency of the country, irrespective of that based on bullion, was now fixed at little more than half of what it had been thirty years before, when the population of the country was only two-thirds and its transactions *not a third* of what they had since become.* It was not said that the arbitrary line of £31,380,000, then taken as the limit of the notes which would be issued on securities, was to be a *fixed line*, admitting of no increase, even although the transactions of the country, as was the case within the next ten years, should be *doubled*.† It was not said that the whole currency beyond this line requiring to be based on bullion, if that bullion was drained away from the country by any cause—as a bad harvest at home, or a serious war abroad—the necessary result would be a sudden and violent contraction of the currency and destruction of credit, at the very time when undertakings the most vast, speculations the most profitable, an amount of labour the most enormous, were in course of being carried into execution. It was not said that, as the *whole currency* of the country, whether based on securities or on bullion, was convertible at the pleasure of the holder into specie, this contraction would of necessity arise *long before* the Bank was approaching the end of its coffers, and when it still possessed the means, save by the operation of this law, of sustaining the commerce and credit of the country. It was not said that, in this way, the

credit of every person in the kingdom would come to depend, not on the prudence of his undertakings, or even the amount of solid realised wealth he possessed, but *solely on the retention of gold by the Bank of England*. It was not said that this retention for any great length of time had been rendered impossible by the system of Free Trade, which was simultaneously introduced, which, of necessity, induced a large balance of imports over exports into the richer country, which would then become, as Spain had long been, not the depositary of gold, but the channel of its transmission to other states. None of these things were said in the Legislature, though they were loudly said in the country. It will appear anon what were the consequences of this omission, and by what providential interference the nation was for a time rescued from the abyss into which it must otherwise have fallen.

57. An event, associated only with scenes of regal pomp and magnificence, but symptomatic of the altered relations of sovereigns and their subjects, occurred this year. This was the visit of Louis Philippe to Queen Victoria, in order to receive the investiture of the Order of the Garter, with which he was honoured on the 9th September. The ceremony was performed with great splendour in the Throne Room of Windsor Castle, in presence of the Queen and ten Companions of the Order, and a brilliant assembly of the Ministry and Court. The few whom the magnificence of the spectacle permitted to reflect, recollected that this Order had been instituted by Edward III. after the battle of Cressy, and that its first Companions were the Black Prince and the other Paladins whose prowess proved so fatal to France at Poitiers and other fields of fame.

Population.			Imports.	Shipping	Declared Value.
			Official Value.	Tons.	
* 1816,	20,500,000	£42,875,996	£32,987,396	2,601,278	£51,603,028
1845,	26,890,000	134,500,116	85,281,955	6,045,718	60,111,081
—Parl. Returns.			British and Irish Exports.	Imports.	
			Declared Value.	Computed Value.	
† 1854,	.	.	£97,184,725	£152,389,053	
1855,	.	.	95,688,085	143,542,850	
1863,	.	.	146,489,758		

—Statistical Abstract, No. xi. p. 10.

How were times now changed! In answer to an address from the incorporation of Windsor, the French King observed: "The union of France is of great importance to both nations, but not from any wish of aggrandisement on the part of either. Our view should be peace, while we leave every other country in possession of those blessings which it has pleased Divine Providence to bestow upon them. France has nothing to ask of England, and England has nothing to ask of France, but cordial union." The 12th was the day fixed for his Majesty's departure, but a violent storm prevented his crossing the Channel on that day, so that he was obliged to change his route, and proceed to Dover. On the route thither, a fresh disaster occurred, for when the train bearing the royal party reached the New Cross station, it was wrapped in flames, and the glare of the conflagration was reflected from the helmets of the escort. Those inclined to superstition drew sinister auguries from these incidents, so quickly succeeding the recent scenes of festivity and magnificence.

58. If this visit was characteristic of the important and auspicious change which had taken place of late years in the relations of France and England, an event which occurred earlier in the year, though considered at the time as one connected only with amusement, was the harbinger of tragic and important events in the east of Europe. On the 1st June, the Emperor of Russia arrived in London, having been preceded by a few hours by the King of Saxony. He was received with her wonted courtesy and magnificence by the Queen, who gave him a splendid series of entertainments in Windsor Palace. One of his Majesty's first acts was to purchase £5000 worth of jewellery in London, which he distributed among the ladies of his acquaintance, whose smiles were liberally bestowed in return for such imperial courtesy; and the favour of the sporting world was not less won by a gift of a cup of uncommon splendour, to be annually run for at Ascot races. Every one who approached him was struck

with the manly dignity of his figure, his noble and serene countenance, and the polished courtesy of his manners, which threw a lustre even over the stately halls of Windsor.*

59. Unmarked amidst the blaze of magnificence which accompanied this imperial pageant, political objects of the highest importance were involved in the Emperor's visit. It was not for the purposes merely of popularity or amusement that the Czar left the shores of the Neva to approach those of the Thames. The object was to prepare the British Government, in secret and confidential conferences, for the designs of Russia upon the Turkish empire. It was intended to unfold the pitiable state of weakness to which that state was reduced, and the absolute necessity of the principal powers of Europe concurring in the measures to be adopted in the event which might ere long occur of its entire dissolution. What the tenor of these conferences was is not yet fully known; but they may be inferred from what has since been published in regard to the proposals of the Czar to Sir H. Seymour, the English ambassador at St Petersburg. These were the cession of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Bulgaria to Russia; of Servia, Bosnia, and the coast of the Adriatic to Austria; of Egypt and Cyprus to England; and the establishment of a power, under the protection of Russia, in Roumelia and Constantinople. Count Nesselrode's memorandum, published since the Crimean war began, leaves no doubt on this point. What answer the British Government returned to these tempting proposals is not known; but the event has proved that it was not such as to disturb the diplomatic relations of the two countries, or prevent the Cabinet of St Petersburg, when it deemed the proper moment arrived, from proceeding of its own authority to carry them into execution. Possibly posterity may say that, for the interests of the British empire, so

* It was a common saying among the ladies who had the honour of being presented to his Majesty, "He is six foot two: every inch an emperor."

deeply implicated in the passage to India by the Red Sea, a more advantageous arrangement could not have been proposed: for Egypt secured that communication, and Cyprus was a guard, at sea at least, against the encroachments of Russia. But it would

have been unjust, for it involved the spoliation of a friendly power; and it is to be hoped England may never have cause to regret having acted as the Athenian people did when a similar proposition was submitted to them by Aristides.

CHAPTER LI.

ENGLAND, FROM THE PASSING OF THE BANK CHARTER ACT IN 1844,
• TO THE PASSING OF SIR R. PEEL'S TARIFF IN 1845.

1. SIR R. PEEL frequently referred to the Bank Charter Act of 1844, and the adoption of Free Trade, as the main causes of the flood of prosperity which overspread the country during the two succeeding years; and there can be no doubt that he was so far right, that the immense increase in railway and other speculations which then took place is in a great degree to be ascribed to the facilities for carrying them on which that Act afforded. The Bank, now laid in chains by Government, had but one thing to do, and that was, to attend closely to the state of the exchanges and the stock of bullion in its coffers, to expand its issues when the former were favourable, the latter large; to contract them when the reverse took place. Circumstances, immediately after the passing of the Act, were eminently favourable to the increased influx and retention of bullion. The supplies from South America, in consequence of the cessation of the desolating war of independence, had become much more abundant, and the drain, from the fineness of the harvests, was now very inconsiderable. The produce of gold in Russia had now become so large* as to exercise a sens-

ible influence on the money market. The import of wheat in the years 1843, 1844, and 1845, was very small; in the latter of these years, it was only 313,000 quarters.* The consequence was, that the Bank coffers were overflowing, and Sir R. Peel boasted, in the pride of his heart, as already mentioned in noticing the Scotch Banking Act in 1845, that it had bullion to the amount of £15,842,000. The necessary effect of this state of things, according to the existing law, was a very great issue of bank-notes by that establishment, which was obliged to give them for all the gold brought to its doors, and of course a corresponding increase in the issue of all other banks, which are all entirely regulated by the proceedings of the Bank of England. During the last half of 1844 and the next two years, the average bullion in the Bank was from £15,000,000 to £16,000,000, and the paper in circulation from £21,000,000 to £23,300,000. The entire paper circulation of the empire during these years was from £39,000,000 to £42,000,000, while the gold and silver was about £30,000,000. True to the principle of the Bank Charter Act, the Bank

* PRODUCE OF GOLD IN RUSSIA.

1837,	£900,000	1842,	• 1,848,000
1838,	1,004,000	1843,	• 2,635,000
1839,	1,003,000	1844,	• 2,730,000
1840,	1,125,000	1845,	• 2,792,000
1841,	1,316,000	1846,	• 3,414,000

—*Parl. Papers*, Dec. 3, 1847; *TOOKE'S History of Prices*, sup. vol., from 1839 to 1847, pp. 452, 453.

* IMPORTS OF WHEAT INTO GREAT BRITAIN.

Years.	Quarters
1842,	• 2,997,809
1843,	• 982,287
1844,	• 1,021,681
1845,	• 813,245

—*PORTER'S Progress of the Nation*, p. 140, 8d edit.

Directors no sooner perceived this favourable state of things than they lowered the rate of their discount from 4 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent; and it did not exceed $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent till the beginning of 1847,* when the monetary crisis was commencing which terminated so fatally in the close of that year. It was impossible that so great a fall in the rate of discount, and so great an increase in the circulating medium, could take place without a corresponding rise of prices in everything except food, which was kept down by the fine harvests; a combination of circumstances of all others most favourable to commercial enterprise and speculation of every kind.

2. The first effect of this state of things, as auspicious in the outset as it was perilous in the end, was a vast increase in railway speculation, and the growth of what has been not inaptly called the RAILWAY MANIA. It was during the years 1844, 1845, and 1846 that this system received its full development, and it was then pushed to a degree of extravagance which would not be credited by future times if not attested by a host of contemporary witnesses, and evinced by lasting effects upon the face and fortunes of the country. Compared with the fever which then seized the public mind, and the magnitude of the speculations in consequence set on foot, the famous South Sea Bubble, in the reign of George I., and the corresponding fervour of England in 1824-25 and 1836-37, sink into insignificance. The progressive rise in the price of the chief articles of commerce was such as to render speculation of every kind for a considerable time a source of very great profit, and to diminish to an extraordinary degree the unfortunate ones which terminated in bankruptcy. The result of this, as usual, was, that people thought that the prosperity which

had now set in would never cease; that the rise of prices, which had proved so profitable to many, would continue for ever. It must be confessed, that for a considerable time appearances seemed to justify the anticipation. The few fortunate speculators who set on foot some of the favourite lines, soon sold their shares at such prices as in a few days enabled them to realise large fortunes. The knowledge of this so increased the public anxiety to share in these profitable investments, that these shares rose every day higher, and scarcely any one who bought had not for a time an opportunity of selling in a few days to advantage. Such was the effect of this, that in a short time the nation seemed to have lost its senses.

3. The effect of this universal mania appeared in a thousand different ways, some of which, it must be confessed, exhibited the national character in no very favourable colours. The passion for gain, now thoroughly awakened, seized upon all classes, pervaded both sexes, swept away all understandings. The grave and the gay, the old and the young, the studious and the volatile, were alike involved in the vortex. The few who ventured to withstand the torrent, and to suggest that the currency and capital of the country were alike inadequate to bear the strain which would soon be brought upon them, were put aside as mere alarmists, whose opinions were entitled to no consideration. It was said the money never left the country, that it only circulated from hand to hand with more rapidity, and that there was enough and to spare. Every one concerned, however remotely, in the great work of forming the network of railways which was to overspread the land, was worked to death, so great was the universal anxiety to get the lines forward. Surveyors with theodolites and

* RATES OF DISCOUNT CHARGED AT THE BANK, AND BULLION IN CIRCULATION.

	Rate of Interest.	Bullion.	Bills under Discount.	Paper out.
1844—Sept. 5,	$2\frac{1}{2}$	£15,210,000	£7,280,000	£21,210,000
1845—Oct. 16,	3	14,190,000	13,590,000	23,380,000
—Nov. 6,	$3\frac{1}{2}$	13,720,000	13,680,000	22,890,000
1846—Aug. 27,	—	16,360,000		21,310,000

—TOOKE *On Prices*, v. 565.

chains were incessantly travelling the country in every direction; and when the proprietor refused his consent to their entry, it was stealthily obtained at night, or openly asserted in daylight by large bodies of men. Nothing could resist the universal frenzy. Park-walls were to be perforated, shady dells penetrated, gardens pierced through, stately mansions levelled with the ground, villages ruined, streets effaced, to make way for these gigantic precursors of human improvement. As the season passed on, and the 30th November, the last day for lodging plans with the Board of Trade, approached, the pressure and excitement became unparalleled. Lithographers by hundreds were brought over from Belgium and France to aid in making the plans; the engineers and their clerks sat up all night, and several of them in two years made large fortunes. On the evening of the closing day the doors of the Board of Trade were besieged by a clamorous crowd contending for admission, as at the pit doors of the opera when a popular actress is to perform: above six hundred plans were thrust in before the doors were shut at midnight on 30th November 1845. The capital required for their construction was £270,950,000, and above £23,000,000 required to be deposited before the Acts could be applied for!

4. It may easily be conceived that so prodigious and universal ferment in society did not take place without unhinging in a great degree the public mind, and bringing forward in the most dangerous way many of the worst qualities of human nature. The same effects on all classes which had been observed in France during the Mississippi Bubble, reappeared in Great Britain, but on a much greater scale, and pervading more universally all gradations of society. The passion for gain, deemed by all to be within their reach, seized upon every rank. Not a doubt was entertained, save by the thinking few, who were derided as alarmists and croakers, of the possibility, nay certainty, of reaching the goal; the only

point was, who was to be first in the race? All classes joined in it: country clergymen and curates hastened to invest the savings of their scanty incomes in the golden investments; traders and shopkeepers in towns almost universally expended their all in similar undertakings; servants, both in affluent and humble families, were to be seen on all sides crowding to the agents' offices in the nearest towns, to throw their little savings into the crucible from whence a golden image was expected to start forth. It was painful to behold the extent of the delusion, mournful to contemplate its certain consequences. No class, not even the very highest, was exempt from it. Ladies of rank and fashion hastened from their splendid West End mansions into the City to besiege the doors of the fortunate speculators, whose abodes were deemed a certain entrance to fabled wealth; the palaces of the exclusives were thrown open to vulgar manners and grotesque habits, to facilitate an entrance into these magicians' dens.

5. Doubtless some classes gained, and that enormously, by this universal insanity. The legislative attorneys, the engineers in chief employment, and the surveyors, rapidly made fortunes. It must be confessed they gave the public something very tempting in appearance, at least, for their money. There was not a line proposed that was not supported by the opinion of professional men of the highest character, to the effect that at least *ten per cent*, probably much more, would be the certain returns to the fortunate shareholders. Experience ere long proved that by doubling the estimated costs, and halving the estimated profits, a much nearer approximation to the truth would be obtained. Under the influence of such powerful excitements it may be believed that, without imputing to any one deliberate and intentional falsehood, great exaggeration prevailed; most erroneous views were successfully palmed off upon the committees, and a vast amount of solid wealth was for ever thrown away, to

the utter ruin of great numbers of innocent persons. These truths were ere long too clearly demonstrated by the result. It was computed that no less than £16,000,000 was expended in surveys, legislation, or litigation connected with the bills got up during the railway mania before they got through Parliament; of the £300,000,000 in round numbers which the lines were computed to cost, nearly a third has never paid anything in the shape of dividend, and on the remaining two-thirds the net receipts, after deducting the working expenses, would not on an average exceed 3 per cent.*

6. It would be well if the historian had only to record the immediate losses which arose to the parties con-

* The sums authorised to be expended by Acts of Parliament on railways in the United Kingdom were as follows in the undermentioned years:—

1843,	.	.	.	£3,861,350
1844,	.	.	.	17,870,361
1845,	.	.	.	60,824,088
1846,	.	.	.	162,096,224
1847,	.	.	.	40,397,395
1848,	.	.	.	14,620,471
1849,	.	.	.	8,155,332

In 7 years, £302,825,221

The entire receipts from and numbers of travellers on these lines, from which nearly one-half required to be deducted for working expenses, were,—

Years,	Gross Receipts.	Number of Passengers.
1845,	£6,209,714	33,791,253
1846,	7,565,569	43,790,793
1847,	8,510,886	51,352,163
1848,	9,993,532	57,965,070
1849,	11,200,901	60,398,159

The number of lines completed in these railways was in 1850,—

	Miles.
England,	4656
Scotland,	846
Ireland,	494
	5996

The Parliamentary expenses incurred in getting some of the principal of these lines were,—

Great Western,	£89,197
London and Birmingham,	72,868
Northern and Eastern,	74,166
South-Eastern,	83,222
Eastern Counties,	39,171
London and South-Western,	41,467
Manchester and Leeds,	49,166
Sheffield and Manchester,	31,473
Glasgow and Greenock,	23,181
North Midland,	41,849

These figures exhibit only the expenses in-

curved in them from these gigantic undertakings. But unfortunately the evil did not stop here; but, on the contrary, has impressed its mark in a lasting way on the national character, and on the estimation in which the Legislature is held. From the extravagant speculations and unbounded gains and losses of the years during which the mania lasted, may be dated a great change, and one materially for the worse, in the mercantile character of the country. The old English merchant, cautious, upright, honourable, lavish in his charities, economical in his household, liberal to others, saving upon himself, has disappeared.

“*Namque avaritia fidem, probitatem ceterasque artes bonas subvertit; pro his superbiam, crudelitatem, deos negligere, omnia venalia habere edocuit. Hæc primo paullatim crescere, interdum vindicari. Post, ubi contagio quasi pestilentia invasit civitas infecta.*” * In the joint-stock companies which succeeded the individual direction of the old English merchant, facilities to fraud were multiplied, inducements to probity taken away. Forgery and embezzlement hoped for evasion in the careless management of the many; honesty and integrity lost their appropriate reward by their fruits being shared by numbers. Every species of fraud—false balance-sheets, false dividends, cooked accounts—was perpetrated, in some cases with long-continued concealment and immense profits. When at length inquiries were begun, the perpetrators of the iniquity

curred by the promoters of the bills, without those incurred by those who opposed them, which were often of still larger amount.—*Parl. Report*, July 10, 1850; *PORTER*, 326, 334, 3d edit.

The following figures show the immense development of the railway system in recent years in the United Kingdom:—

Years.	Miles.	Gross Receipts.	Number of Passengers.
1862,	11,551	£29,128,558	180,485,725

—*Statistical Abstract*, No. xl. p. 91.

* “For avarice subverted faith, probity, and all other good dispositions; instead of these we have pride, cruelty, negligence of the gods, regard of everything as venal.” These feelings first gradually increased, then came to be openly vindicated. At length the contagion invaded the state as yet unchanged.” —*SALLUST, Bell. Cat.*

had in general escaped. Aware of what was coming, they had in time disposed of their shares to the widow and the orphan, who, deceived by their representations, bore the penalty of their sins. The *transferable* nature of the shares in those public companies added immensely to the facilities of fraud, for the shares could be disposed of before the deceit was discovered. Unfortunately the Legislature itself did not in the general whirl escape, at least in general estimation, unscathed; and the railway committees, pressed with business, and distracted by opposite opinions from witnesses of equal respectability and skill, gave such various and contradictory decisions, that the public confidence in the wisdom and disinterestedness of their legislation was, for the time at least, seriously impaired.

7. Another consequence of a very curious and unexpected kind arose from the rise and extraordinary extension of railway speculation in Great Britain at this time, and this was the division on a vital question which it occasioned in the landed interest. The first step taken by every railway company, when any new line was to be set on foot, was to endeavour to conciliate the landed proprietors through whose estates it was to pass, and this they did by offering them shares of the new undertaking, and ample sums in name of damages for the ground taken. If neither bait took, and a squire proved obdurate, he generally got such ample damages from the juries, who deemed the railway funds inexhaustible, as entirely opened his eyes and altered his views as to the comparative merit of the railway and landed interest. In this way a most important object was gained, attended with decisive effects in the great contest which immediately after ensued. The landed interest, hitherto so united, was *divided*; a considerable portion of it came to regard its interests as identified with the railways—that is, the commercial interest—rather than with the fields—that is, the agricultural. It was

the constant argument of the Anti-Corn-Law League that the repeal of the laws protecting agriculture would immensely augment the internal traffic of the country, and that between the effects of large quantities of grain coming in, and still larger of minerals and manufactures going out, an unlimited amount of carriage on the railways might with confidence be anticipated. There can be no question that these views were, in part at least, well founded; and being presented to a generation heated by the railway mania, and the very persons most likely in the first instance to profit by it, they proved with many landed proprietors extremely serviceable. Their interests as claimants on railways or owners of their shares overbalanced their interests as proprietors of the soil. Thus at the very time when the universal distress arising from five bad seasons in succession had engendered a powerful league, which was making unheard-of efforts to abolish every remnant of protection to agriculture, an element of seduction was thrown among its defenders, which caused many of them at the decisive moment to disappear from the ranks in which they had hitherto been found.

8. The immediate effect of the vast expenditure of capital upon domestic undertakings, which the railway mania occasioned, was immense. The demand for labourers was such, that even the multitudes of workmen who came over from the neighbouring island, to the number at one time of nearly a million, were unable to satisfy it. Wages of all kinds rose to nearly double their former amount. Common day-labourers, instead of eighteen pence, were getting half-a-crown and three shillings a-day; colliers and iron-miners six or seven shillings, instead of three shillings and sixpence or four shillings. The price of all the materials used in railways, especially iron, rose to an extravagant height; in December 1846 it was at £12 a ton, more than double its former price. The immense sums circulated in wages augmented to a

very great degree the consumption of butcher-meat, beer, tea, sugar, and all articles of wearing apparel, which diffused prosperity through the dealers in these articles.* The shuttle and the hammer rang merrily; joy and gladness for a brief space pervaded the land. This state of general prosperity was attended, as is always the case, with one result, at which every friend of mankind must rejoice, a sensible diminution of crime.† This is generally, it may be said always, the consequence of a state of prosperity and a general increase in the demand for labour. It arises in some degree, without doubt, from the lessening of the number of those unhappy persons who are forced by actual want and suffering into the commission of crime. But in many more instances it is to be ascribed to the giving the working classes, generally speaking, *full occupation*; a more effectual antidote against crime, in all ranks of society, than any other which human wisdom has ever yet devised.

9. In one respect the general adoption of the railway system in the British Islands has proved a lasting benefit,

especially to the commercial and manufacturing classes. It has in a manner brought the different workshops of the empire together, and enabled each to obtain in an incredibly short space of time, and at a comparatively trifling expense, what it requires from the other. Immense is the advantage thence accruing to all the branches of manufacture; so great, indeed, as to have lengthened the start, already sufficiently great, which Great Britain had acquired over other nations in these respects. To the agriculturists also, especially in distant localities, it has proved a very great benefit, by bringing them in a manner much nearer their principal markets, and enabling butcher-meat and dairy produce of every kind to be brought even from the most distant places to the metropolis and great towns; while the inhabitants there have equally gained, by the lessened price at which these articles can be purchased. In one respect, however, it has been attended by a consequence by no means equally satisfactory, and which has already come to exercise an important influ-

* The following figures, quoted by Sir R. Peel, in his address to the electors of Tamworth, prove the great effect of the railway expenditure in ameliorating the condition and enlarging the consumption of the people:—

Articles Consumed.	1841	1846
Cocoa, lb.	1,930,764	2,962,327
Coffee, do.	28,420,980	36,781,391
Currants, cwt.	190,071	859,315
Rice, do.	245,887	466,961
Pepper, lb.	2,750,790	3,297,431
Sugar, cwt.	4,065,971	5,231,845
Molasses, do.	402,422	582,665
Tea, lb.	36,681,877	46,728,208
Tobacco and Snuff, . . do.	22,308,385	27,001,908
Brandy, gallons,	1,165,137	1,515,954
Geneva, do.	15,404	40,211
British Spirits, . . . do.	20,642,333	23,122,581
Malt charged with duty, bushels,	36,164,446	41,979,000

—Sir R. Peel to Electors of Tamworth, July 1847.—*Peel's Memoirs*, ii. p. 104.

† COMMITTEES IN ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND.

Years.	England.	Scotland.	Ireland.
1842	31,309	4,189	21,186
1843	29,591	3,615	20,126
1844	26,542	3,575	19,448
1845	24,303	3,537	18,696
1846	25,107	4,069	18,492

—PORTER, pp. 646, 658, 663.

ence upon the political balance and future destinies of the State. It has enormously increased the inhabitants and wealth, and in a proportional degree augmented the political preponderance, of the great towns. The metropolis and the chief commercial and manufacturing cities having become so easy of access, the concourse of the inhabitants of the country to the vast emporiums of industry, wealth, and pleasure, has been increased to an unprecedented degree. The greater part of the purchases, even by the inhabitants of the most distant counties, are now made in them. Their wealth and population in consequence are rapidly augmenting, while the small towns are declining, and in many of the rural districts the numbers of the people are rapidly diminishing. London is now adding 60,000 souls annually to its numbers; Glasgow, Liverpool, and Manchester, from 10,000 to 12,000 each; while from the agricultural districts of Ireland 2,000,000 human beings have emigrated during the last sixteen years, and, generally speaking, the inhabitants of the purely agricultural or pastoral counties are declining. This is a most serious consideration, for it augments the resemblance, in many respects so close, between the state and prospects of society in the British Islands, and that which characterised Italy and Greece in the declining days of the Roman Empire.

10. In one respect the railway system has bequeathed a great and enduring benefit to the species, which will survive the empire which gave it birth. It has brought to the inhabitants of the towns the means of going to the country, and to the inhabitants of the country the means of going into the towns. "Railways," says Miss Martineau, "were to run not only along the margin of the southern part of the island, and round the margin of the misty Scottish mountains, but through the vale in which Furness Abbey had hitherto stood shrouded, and among old cathedrals, of which the traveller might see half-a-dozen in a day. It was on Easter Monday 1844 that ex-

cursion trips with return-tickets were first heard of. Here began the benefits of cheap pleasure-trips to the hard workers of the nation. The process had begun from which incalculable blessings were to accrue to the mind, morals, and manners of the people. From this time the exclusive class was to meet the humbler classes face to face. The peer, and the manufacturer, and the farmer, were henceforth to meet and talk in the railway carriage, and have a chance of understanding each other. The proud were to part with some of their prejudice, and the ignorant with some of their ignorance; and other walls of partition than park enclosures were to be thrown down. The operative was to see new sights hitherto quite out of his reach—the ocean, the mountain, the lake, and old ruins, and new inventions; and the London artisan was ere long to live within sight of trees and green fields, and yet go to his work every day. As unwholesome streets in London were pulled down, hamlets were to arise at a little distance in the country, from which the humbler classes could go and return to their daily labour in the centre of the town. The diet of millions was to be improved, fish and foreign fruits being conveyed from the town into the country, and milk, butter, and vegetables, fresh from the country, into the towns. Everybody's wants were to become known by the general communication about to be established, and the supply was to reach the want, and the wish. The change was vast, the prospect magnificent; but this change, like every other, had to pass at its outset through a wilderness of difficulties."

11. It can hardly be supposed that a statesman so experienced as Sir R. Peel was really deceived by the flattering and fallacious appearances which the effects of the railway mania at first exhibited, or that he imagined present prospects were to be perpetual. Certain it is, however, that he acted as if he believed this really was to be the case. Carried away by the tumult of activity and temporary prosperity

which pervaded the country, he did everything in his power, both as an individual and the head of the Government, to swell the enthusiasm in which it originated. By the existing rules of Parliament, a tenth of the estimated expense of every railway required to be deposited before the bill for promoting it was introduced. A committee was appointed to consider the subject in 1844, and it recommended that the deposit-money should be reduced a half, or to a twentieth, which was immediately made the foundation of a bill which obtained the sanction of Parliament in the same session. To this great concession in favour of speculation, the vast increase in it which so soon after took place, and the unbounded effects which thence arose, is in a great measure to be ascribed. The general fervour on the subject was ever long still farther inflamed by the imposing ceremony which took place at the commencement of the Trent Valley Railway, when Sir R. Peel in person, with a silver spade, turned up the first sod, which was followed by the most enthusiastic speeches on the unbounded prospects which these undertakings were to open to the country.

12. To appreciate the immense effect this reduction in the sums required as deposits to be paid had in stimulating these extraordinary undertakings, it is only necessary to refer to the official accounts of the railways, for which plans were deposited in terms of the Act of Parliament up to the 31st December 1845. The number of these lines for which plans were lodged was, in 1844, 248; but in 1845 it had risen to the enormous amount of 815! The sums deposited on the lines in the first year were £6,432,155, and the estimated sums to complete the undertakings were £44,927,000. In the succeeding year, however, the capital required to be paid on deposits for new projects was £59,136,000; the sum of £60,927,000 had been already expended on the lines in the course of execution; and the liabilities connected with the new projects, after deducting the deposits paid, amounted to the enormous and almost fabulous sum of

£590,447,000! It is difficult to say to what state the country would have been reduced if these wild speculations had all been carried into execution; and nothing can illustrate so strongly the extreme peril of the course on which Government had now adventured, in first passing a Bank Charter Act, which in effect compelled the Bank, and all other banks, to lower their discounts to 3 per cent when gold was plentiful, and then a Railway Act, which reduced the sums required to be paid in deposit on the projected lines from 10 to 5 per cent.

13. Like many other rash and imprudent courses of conduct, however fraught with lasting and perilous consequences, the measures of Government at this period were attended by immediate and flattering benefits. The path which led directly over the abyss was in the outset strewn with flowers. The prosperous condition of all the great interests in the country was unequivocally evinced in the returns of its trade, manufactures, shipping, and revenue. The imports between 1842 and 1847 rose from £65,000,000 to £90,000,000; and the declared value of the British and Irish exports from £47,000,000 to £58,000,000. The revenue, notwithstanding a reduction of taxation in these five years of about £6,000,000, which more than compensated the income-tax, had advanced from £47,000,000 to £51,500,000. The shipping in the same period rose from 4,600,000 tons to above 7,000,000 tons, indicating an increase of at least 50 per cent in the bulk and weight of the exports and imports of the country. All this took place not only without any increase, but with an extraordinary diminution, in our imports of food, which, till the disastrous years 1846 and 1847, which witnessed the Irish famine, had sunk to little more than 300,000 quarters of wheat a-year! It must be confessed that this extraordinary flood of prosperity, enduring for five years immediately succeeding a corresponding period of unmitigated adversity which had preceded it, afforded a just subject of congratulation to the Prime Minister, and seemed to

warrant the confidence of the country in a statesman whose magic wand had so quickly converted desolation and ruin into riches and prosperity.*

14. Sir R. Peel made an adroit use of the flood of prosperity which, from a temporary cause, was thus poured upon the country, to carry out to a much greater extent than he had hitherto done the new commercial policy with which he conceived the wellbeing of the country was indissolubly wound up. He was enabled to meet the Parliament of 1845 in the most triumphant manner. The wisdom of his policy seemed to be established, beyond the possibility of doubt, by the result. Instead of the woeful tale of a deficit, which under the administration of his predecessors had so often sickened the heart of the nation, he was to come forward with the glad tidings of a large surplus. Supposing, he said, the property-tax to be continued, the revenue in the year ending 5th April 1846 would amount to £53,700,000, and the expenditure would be only £49,700,000, even after taking into account an increase of £1,000,000 for the service of the navy, which he most wisely proposed. But as £600,000 of this surplus consisted of payments from China, which would only continue a year more, he would take the income at £53,100,000, leaving a surplus of £3,400,000 when the additional estimates for the navy were taken into consideration.

15. "I now approach," said Sir Robert, "the most important question of all, which is, how we are to dispose of this surplus. I propose to do so by continuing the income-tax, and making a great reduction in the duties on con-

sumption. I would not have proposed this if I had not felt the strongest persuasion that by continuing the income-tax it will be in the power of the House to make arrangements with respect to taxation, which will be the foundation of great future commercial prosperity, and which will add materially to the comforts of those who are called upon to contribute to it. In considering the taxes on consumption which are to be reduced, the points to be taken into view are the weight of the taxes which enter into the price of articles of general consumption, those which press most heavily on the raw materials which constitute the staple manufactures of the country, the comparative expense incurred in their collection, and which taxes, if removed, would give most scope to the commercial enterprise of the country. These are the objects which Government have had in view, in the selection of taxes for reduction, which I am about to propose. I do not propose to maintain any considerable surplus of income over expenditure; but in the conviction that the House will at all events maintain public credit, I shall propose a reduction of certain duties which are rather onerous than productive. First, to begin with sugar, I propose to lower the duty on brown muscovado from 25s. 3d. to 14s. On East India sugar of the same description, the duty to be 18s. 8d., and on free-labour foreign sugar 23s. 3d. The effect of these changes will be, I think, to lower the price of sugar 1½d. a-pound at a cost to the revenue of £1,300,000 a-year. The export duty on coals I propose to take away altogether at a cost of £120,000. On the raw materials em-

* EXPORTS, IMPORTS, AND REVENUE OF GREAT BRITAIN, AND SHIPPING AND POOR-RATES OF ENGLAND FROM 1842 TO 1847, BOTH INCLUDED.

Years.	British and Irish Exports—Declared Value.	Imports—Official Value.	Revenue from Taxation.	Shipping—Tons.	Poor Rates—England.	Number of Paupers—England.
1842	£47,381,028	£65,204,729	£46,965,631	4,627,446	£4,912,498	1,427,187
1843	52,278,449	70,003,353	52,582,847	4,977,266	5,208,027	1,539,490
1844	58,584,292	85,441,555	54,063,754	5,297,168	4,976,093	1,477,561
1845	60,111,081	85,281,958	53,060,354	6,031,557	5,039,703	1,470,970
1846	57,786,875	75,953,875	53,790,138	6,314,571	4,954,204	1,392,089
1847	58,842,377	90,921,866	51,546,265	7,033,163	5,298,787	1,721,350

ployed in manufactures, 813 in number, I propose to remove altogether the duty on 430, which will get rid of a vast number of troublesome accounts, and no small amount of expense; and release altogether from duty the important raw materials of silk, hemp, flax, certain kinds of yarns, furniture woods, animal and vegetable manures, and a great variety of lesser articles. The entire loss to the Treasury from these reductions will be only £320,000, and the relief to the country immense. The duty on cotton wool is to be entirely taken off, at a loss of £680,000 to the Exchequer. The duty on glass is from 200 to 300 per cent on the cost of the manufactured article, a burden which renders competition impossible with the manufacturers of France, Belgium, and Bohemia. I propose to take this tax off altogether, which will occasion a loss to the revenue of £642,000. These reductions taken together amount to £3,338,000, being within a trifle of the surplus of £3,409,000 with which the House has to deal. In consideration of these reductions, and of the benefit they will confer upon the country, I propose the farther continuance, for the limited period of three years, of the income-tax."

16. On the other hand it was contended by Mr Baring: "Sir R. Peel originally demanded the income-tax for three years as a means of temporarily restoring the revenue, upon the promise that the tax, when this had been effected, was to be removed; but what is the state of the finances now? On the face of his own estimate the income in the ensuing year, if you deduct from it the income-tax and the Chinese payments, is only £47,900,000, and the expenditure £49,700,000, leaving a deficiency on the revenue, as it stood before it was laid on, of £1,800,000. This is a circumstance well worthy of consideration. You imposed the income-tax to close a deficiency and compensate a large reduction of indirect taxation, and after a trial of three years in a period of profound and universal peace, and when the public revenues during all that time have been

largely benefited by the Chinese payments, the income has not recovered itself, and but for that tax the nation would be still in an annual deficiency of nearly £2,000,000. Your boasted surplus is entirely made up of the income-tax; and, markworthy circumstance, the effect of the large repeal of the indirect taxes made three years ago has not been, as was predicted, to restore the revenue in other quarters, but were it not for the direct income-tax the Exchequer would still be in a state of lamentable deficiency. Sir R. Peel has calculated the surplus, even with the income-tax kept on, at only £90,000; and that excess, small as it is, rests entirely upon the supposition of an increased consumption which was by no means sure of being realised. We are told that the selection of articles on which the tax is to be remitted has been made on the principle of being able to take off the entire income-tax at the end of three more years; but in proceeding on that supposition it is much to be feared he is repeating again the too sanguine anticipations of 'Prosperity Robinson,' who took off taxes to the amount of three or four millions, expecting that in three years the revenue would in consequence increase five millions.

17. "The facts by no means warrant these expectations. Nothing is so fallacious in principle, or has been so often disproved in practice, as the assertion not so often repeated, that the only way to insure an increase of the revenue is to lower the duties. The contrary has been decisively established by experience; scarcely an instance is to be found in our annals of a considerable remission of taxation being followed by such an increase of consumption as compensated the loss to the revenue. In 1816 the revenue was £71,200,000; taxes were taken off to the amount of £17,500,000; and in 1819 the revenue was only £52,155,000, showing a difference of £19,745,000; and proving that the other branches of the revenues, so far from having improved by this great reduction of taxes, had actually fallen off in the next three years by £2,600,000, even after de-

ducting from the deficiency the whole amount of the taxes remitted. In the five years ending in 1826 the taxes remitted were £13,000,000, and the revenue was not restored by about £4,000,000. In the three years ending in 1829 the taxes taken off were £9,600,000; but even in 1839 the revenue had not recovered the loss by £4,600,000. Between 1815 and 1830 the taxes taken off were £33,000,000; and the loss to the revenue was £22,000,000. In the face of these facts, so uniform and so long continued, what ground is there for believing that the effect of the present remission of taxes will be different, or that increased consumption will now for the first time follow diminished duties? It is too evident that the expectation is entirely illusory; increased consumption will never compensate seriously-diminished indirect taxation, and if the House agrees to remit the duties on consumption now proposed for reduction, it is equivalent to consenting for ever to what he has himself called 'the dire scourge of direct taxation.'"

18. Notwithstanding these arguments, so entirely were the views of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in harmony with the ideas of the great majority of the House, that the bill passed, with very little opposition, by a majority of 208, the numbers being 263 to 55. This great majority was obtained by the junction of nearly the whole Liberal party with the adherents of the Administration, leaving a small minority of decided Protectionists and Radicals alone in opposition. But although this financial project thus excited very little discussion, and was carried by so large a majority, yet it was a most unfortunate step in the financial history of Great Britain, and was the first decided announcement of the new commercial and financial system which was thereafter for a considerable period to govern the Legislature of the country.

19. Three things eminently descriptive of the vast alteration in the ideas of men, and the ruling principles of statesmen, are particularly worthy of

observation in this debate and decision of the House. The first is, that by common consent the income-tax was now continued for three years longer, when not only had all the circumstances stated in justification of its first imposition ceased to exist, but the situation of the nation was the reverse. In 1842 the news had just been received of an unparalleled disaster in Afghanistan; an expensive war was raging in China; and Government at home had to contend with a yawning deficit yearly increasing, which at length had reached the formidable amount of £3,500,000 a-year. Now, the disaster in Afghanistan had been effaced by a glorious triumph; the war in China had ceased, and its expenses been succeeded by a large tribute, which had considerably tended to right the British finances; profound peace prevailed in every part of the world; and so far from a deficit of £3,500,000 a-year existing, there was a surplus in the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer of exactly that amount. Yet the income-tax was renewed without any abatement! The second is, that the large surplus which, for the first time since 1837, the public finances exhibited, was applied, *not* to the reduction of the income or other *direct* taxes, but of a variety of *indirect* taxes, considered as oppressive to the springs of industry, or as entering largely into the price of articles of general consumption. The third was, that no surplus whatever was reserved for the liquidation of the National Debt, the interest being provided for, and no more. The times were far distant from those when the House of Commons pledged itself, by solemn protestations in 1819, never, under any circumstances, to suffer the Sinking Fund to sink below £5,000,000. A new system of finance directly opposed to the former had been adopted, which worked as great a change in our national prospects as free trade did in our commercial; and that system consisted in the substitution of direct for indirect taxation, and the entire abandonment of the Sinking Fund.

20. The Sinking Fund had been so

long ignored, in consequence of its almost constant disappearance, since the monetary system of 1819 was introduced. The National Debt, which in 1819 was £794,980,480, in 1844 was still £771,069,858—showing a diminution of only £23,000,000 in twenty-five years. In the twenty-two years ending with 1850, the sum paid off was only £16,547,000. The nation had thus become accustomed to regard the reduction of the National Debt as, practically speaking, an impossibility; and therefore it was not surprising that the entire devotion of the surplus to the reduction of taxation by Sir R. Peel excited very little attention. But it is not so apparent how they so quietly submitted, in a period of profound peace and unexampled prosperity, to a substitution of a heavy direct for a comparatively light indirect taxation, and the reimposition of a burden against which the people had risen as one man at the close of the French war. This was no doubt in a great degree owing to the fact, that the income-tax, as now restored, reached incomes only above £150 a-year, whereas the former came down to £50, and the nation generally had no objection to a heavy load of exclusive taxation being laid on a body of proprietors not numbering in all two hundred thousand persons. Add to this, that the mercantile class, taken as a body, always advocate direct in preference to indirect taxation, for the simple reason that they can easily evade the former but not the latter. This the landholders cannot do. They hope, too, that the diminution of indirect taxes will augment their sales and increase their profits. But the main reason why at this juncture the substitution of direct for indirect taxation to so considerable an extent was not seriously objected to was, that the effect of the cheapening system introduced in 1819, and rigidly carried out by subsequent Acts, had been to occasion so great a fall in the price of the articles of commerce, and the consequent incomes of the persons dealing in them, that a corresponding diminution in the fiscal burdens attaching to them had become, in a manner, a

matter of necessity. Thus the monetary system of Sir R. Peel was the immediate cause of the extinction of the Sinking Fund, the fearful reduction in the military and naval armaments of the State, the abandonment of protection, and introduction of free trade in its room, and the reimposition of the income-tax as a permanent burden upon the nation—effects so great and momentous as amply to vindicate the prominent place assigned to that system among the great springs of social change in those islands in the first half of the nineteenth century.

21. While Great Britain was thus engaged in the prosecution of changes consequent on the extension of the currency during the influx of gold under the Bank Charter Act, and the effects of the alterations were appearing in an entire change in the financial and commercial policy of the State, Ireland was fast relapsing into the state of savage barbarism from which it had been temporarily extricated by the influence of O'Connell and the preaching of Father Mathew. During the influence of the former the passions of the people had been kept enchained as by the arms of a mighty enchanter, in order to hurl them, like the force of a well-disciplined army, with accumulated force against the Government. Under the enthusiasm awakened by the latter, the funds, which hitherto had been wasted in riot and intoxication, were mainly directed to the formation and support of a fund destined to effect the repeal of the Union, and the severance of Ireland from connection with Great Britain. But although during particular moments of fervour such political or religious passions may prevail over the natural wants and instincts of our nature, no reliance can be placed on their exercising any lasting sway over mankind. The period of reaction speedily arrives, and when it does, the effects of the long pent-up passions, like the ravages of a restrained flood, are only the greater from the duration of the previous coercion. This truth was strikingly evinced in Ireland at this period; for the serious crimes

for which persons were committed in 1845 were only 16,696, while in 1846 they had risen to 18,492, and in 1847, when the famine had begun, to 31,209.

22. Sir R. Peel was deeply affected by the accounts which reached him from all quarters of the increase of disorder and agrarian crimes in Ireland, and the relaxation of the strong bond of coercion which had hitherto been thrown on the passions of the people by the influence of the Roman Catholic clergy; and he thought the means of restoring order could only be found in raising the character and extending the influence of the higher classes of the Romish clergy. He endeavoured, with this view, to extend to them, and to the community generally, the benefits of an improved secular and religious education. Impressed with these ideas, he inserted in the Queen's Speech in this session a recommendation to the Commons to consider the best means of extending and improving academical education in Ireland; and in pursuance of this suggestion, Sir James Graham brought in a bill on 9th May for the erection of three colleges—one at Belfast, one at Cork, and one in Limerick—where the most ample means were to be afforded for education to all classes and all sects of religion. There were to be no theological professors in any of them; the object being to furnish the means of secular education without religious distinction; but every facility was to be given to the establishment of theological chairs by voluntary means in connection with the colleges. It could not be said that this establishment was excessive in a country where there were at this time 8,400,000 inhabitants, 400,000 children at the national schools, and as yet only one university—that of Trinity College, Dublin. The amount proposed, too, was very moderate, being only £100,000 to build the three colleges, and £18,000 a-year from the Consolidated Fund to keep them up. The bill passed, accordingly, by a majority of 177 to 26 in the Commons, and without a division in the Lords, and the colleges were established. Sincere but vehement partisans on both

sides, however, violently objected to the absence of religious teaching, and the cry of "godless colleges" resounded alike in the Protestant and the Catholic ranks. Yet, however much it is to be regretted that circumstances should ever occur which render it necessary to separate religious from secular education, it is difficult to see what other plan could have been followed in a country so distracted by theological disputes, that each party would rather see their children ignorant than educated by their opponents. And although the new colleges have not been attended with all the success which was anticipated from them, their progress has been respectable, and they have undoubtedly conferred great benefits on the community.

23. Another measure, framed with the view of elevating the character of, and lessening the political danger arising from, the Roman Catholic clergy, was brought forward in this session, which excited a much more violent opposition, and is still the subject of deep regret to a large and influential portion of the community. This was an enlarged endowment for Maynooth College, where the Catholic clergy were educated in the principles of their own faith. The original grant to this establishment had been £9000 a-year; but this was found to be altogether inadequate either to its necessities or the numbers of persons requiring education there, who, being almost all in the very humblest ranks of life, were unable to contribute anything to the expenses of the college. To remedy this defect, and, if possible, elevate the class both of the teachers and the pupils at the seminary, Sir R. Peel proposed to extend the Government grant to £26,380 a-year, to make provision for five hundred students, and raise the professors' salaries, so as to insure comfort and respectability to persons holding these situations. As might have been expected, this measure excited the most violent opposition among the zealous Protestants, and meetings were held in every part of the kingdom as soon as it was brought forward, in which it was denounced, in the most unmeas-

ured terms, as a direct encouragement of Popery, superstition, and treason, both to the State and the Christian religion. The Dissenters over the whole kingdom cordially united with the Episcopalians in resisting the measure; and in some of the most violent meetings, it was proposed and carried, amidst loud acclamations, that the Prime Minister should be impeached. After many days of animated and protracted debate, however, the bill was carried in the Commons by a majority of 133, the numbers being 317 to 184. In the Lords, it excited also a violent debate, but was carried by a majority of 157, the numbers being 226 to 69. A protest was lodged by five bishops and three lay peers, on the ground that the bill "provided for the maintenance of religious error and opposition to the Reformation, and countenanced the notion that religious truth was a matter of indifference to the State."

24. By this bill the Roman Catholics gained the great advantage, the importance of which was not at first perceived, but ere long became conspicuous, which was, that the maintenance of their educational establishment, on a liberal scale, was thrown on the consolidated fund, and thereby withdrawn from the annual votes of Parliament; and there can be no doubt that the nation gained also, at least in point of tranquillity, by having a subject exciting such violent passions emancipated from annual discussion. Never was a measure introduced with better intentions, or more in harmony with the principles of an enlightened toleration, and yet its effects have been to the last degree disastrous; and what is very remarkable, chiefly from its defeating the very object for which it was introduced. This is now admitted by every candid observer of all parties, religious as well as civil. It was intended to elevate the condition and acquirements of the Catholic clergy, and bring them more into harmony with the Government of the State, and it has had just the opposite effect. It has lowered the standard both of their education and ideas, and render-

ed them more than ever the irreconcilable enemies of the Protestant Establishment and British connection. This has arisen from a cause which was never thought of by either the advocates or the opponents of the measure; but which, when it came into operation, produced decisive effects, and that so naturally, that the only astonishing thing is, that it was not foreseen and predicted from the beginning.

25. The cause of the failure is, that the young priests are now educated at home instead of abroad, and thereby become more impregnated than ever with the bigotry and violent feelings which centuries of dissension have engendered between the rival Churches in Ireland. Before Maynooth was established, the young men intended for the priesthood were all sent to St Omer, Salamanca, or some foreign university; and it was the precise object of its institution to put a stop to this, because it was thought it brought the clerical youth under foreign ecclesiastical influence. It has prevented that evil, but it has induced a much greater one—namely, the bringing them under the direct control of a body much inferior in acquirement, and much more inflamed by passion, than any foreign hierarchy—the Romish clergy of Ireland. Half a century ago, when the priests had all been educated at a foreign seminary, the Catholic incumbent of a parish in Ireland was often the best informed, and sometimes the most liberal person in it. It would be no easy matter to find such a phenomenon now. Educated at Maynooth, instructed by its local teachers, and contracted in their ideas and information to the narrow and impassioned field of Irish contention, the priests have become less informed, and, as a necessary consequence, more bigoted. Liberality, which was formerly advancing with rapid strides among them, has been almost entirely blighted by this calamitous change, and Great Britain has found to its cost that there is an evil greater than that of the priesthood being educated at a foreign seminary, and that is, being educated at their

26. A measure which excited much less attention at the time than these fiercely debated Irish questions, but was attended with unmitigated blessings in the end, was the new Poor-Law Bill, introduced by Lord Advocate M'Neill,* for Scotland, which passed into law in this session of Parliament. Like England and all other countries which embraced the Protestant faith, Scotland at the Reformation had experienced the immense evils arising from the suppression of the streams of charity which in former days had flowed from the walls of the monastic establishments. Left destitute by this calamitous change, in the midst of a rude and distracted country, the poor in Scotland were reduced to the lowest point of misery, insomuch that a great and comprehensive measure for their relief was in a manner forced upon the Legislature. This was done by the Act 1579, c. 74, which, nearly contemporary with the 42d of Elizabeth, the foundation of the English poor-laws, and brought about by the same necessity, was mainly copied from the English statute, and fully imbued with its humane and benevolent spirit. By this Act, the poor, the sick, the aged, the indigent, the impotent, and those who have not wherewithal to maintain themselves, were declared entitled to legal relief; and the heritors in each parish were ordered to meet and assess themselves for their relief, the one-half to be laid on the landlords, and the other on the tenants.

27. It is impossible that words can be found indicating a more humane intention than those in this statute; but unfortunately the whole intentions of the Legislature were frustrated, and Scotland was left, for two centuries and a half after it had passed, practically speaking, without any system of parochial relief at all, in consequence of an unfortunate decision of the Court of Session in regard to its administration. Repeated statutes and royal proclamations had enjoined the sheriffs and justices to put the law into full execution; but the administration of it was intrusted, in the first instance,

* Now (1857) the Lord Justice-General

to the heritors and kirk-session, or churchwardens, of each parish, who formed a little court which was to sit in judgment on each claim for relief preferred against the parish. Unhappily the Supreme Judges took up the idea that this administrative body constituted a court of law in the legal sense of the word, and therefore that their decisions could be reviewed only in the Court of Session. Thus were the sheriffs, the ordinary judges of the counties, ousted of their jurisdiction in this matter; and as a decision of the Court of Session could not, in general, be obtained in less than eighteen months, and at a cost of at least £60 or £70, the review of that supreme court was of course, in the case of paupers, practically speaking, out of the question. Thus the heritors and kirk-session, the very parties who were to bear the assessment, were rendered virtually judges without appeal *in their own cause*. The result was that which ever has been, and ever will be, the case where such an absurd anomaly in judicial procedure is permitted; they decided almost every case substantially in their own favour. They did not absolutely resist all claims for parochial relief, but they doled it out with so sparing a hand that, practically speaking, it was no relief at all. A shilling a-week to a widow with three or four children was deemed an ample allowance, and in most places even this pittance was refused; for in five-sixths of the parishes of Scotland, though they all abounded with paupers, there was no rate levied at all. So far had this gone that it was universally thought in England, and even believed in many parts of Scotland itself, that there were no poor-laws to the north of the Tweed.

28. As long as Scotland was a purely agricultural and pastoral country, this state of things was not attended with the evils which might have been anticipated. The landlords were generally resident; the collections at the church-doors for the poor were tolerably liberal; and a strong feeling of pride existed among the peasantry to endure any privations rather than ap-

ply themselves, or allow their relations to apply, for public charity. But with the spread of mines and manufactures, the increase of wealth, and the rise of great towns, this auspicious social condition of the people came to a termination. A large proportion of the poor in all the great towns came to be Irish, who were far from their relations and utterly destitute; and the habits of civilised life and frequent migration of the working-classes from one place to another, rendered them almost all entirely unknown to the affluent around them when overtaken by misfortune. These evils, which had been long felt and bemoaned by the humane, though stoutly denied by the selfish, were brought to a climax by the long-continued distress in the country from 1837 to 1842, during which the poor of Scotland, almost entirely unprovided for, underwent miseries probably unparalleled in any Christian land, for they had the evils of civilisation without its advantages. Fortunately these evils, and particularly the connection of continued fever, as well as other epidemics, with the condition of the poor in the larger towns, at length attracted the attention of some members of the medical body. This was the more important, as some of the most benevolent members both of the clerical and legal professions, trusting too much to speculative views as to the causes of destitution, and less conversant with the realities of life in the lowest parts of our large towns, set themselves in decided opposition to any change in the old Scotch system of merely voluntary relief.*

29. On the other hand, a variety of facts tended to prove, that in a complex state of society the system of voluntary relief is never sufficient to meet the increase of destitution, which the varying modes of human existence, and the powers of procreation granted to the human species, naturally involve; that the increase of population, instead of being checked, as Malthus

* See particularly Dr Chalmers and the late Lord Pringle. See *Proposed Alterations in the Scottish Poor-Law considered and commented on*. Edinburgh, 1840.

and others had supposed, by the increase of sin and misery, goes on in an increased ratio, under any circumstances admitting of human existence. The examples of Ireland and the Highlands of Scotland too surely indicated that, simply by reason of the habitual *recklessness of character*, and absence of all *artificial wants*, in people brought up in a state of extreme poverty, this result inevitably follows. The natural result of this state of things is severe suffering, and sometimes absolute destruction of great part of such populations, by famine and epidemic diseases. This consequence is always most to be apprehended when the richer members of such a people are accustomed to think it wisdom and charity to withdraw their attention from such sufferings, and "pass by on the other side;" and in such a state of society the only security which experience has shown to be effectual for applying remedies to the *early stage* of such evils, is that which is given by making Christian charity a part and parcel of the law, whereby assistance may be *claimed* by those whose habits will otherwise inevitably degenerate into recklessness and profligacy, and systematic inspection may be depended on for counteracting idleness and imposture. Fortunately, these evils attracted the attention of one who had the heart to feel, the courage to assert, and the ability to carry through, what was necessary to provide a remedy for them. DR ALISON, who had devoted benevolence unbounded, and talents of no ordinary kind, to the alleviation of the suffering with which he was surrounded in the city of Edinburgh, wrote several pamphlets, portraying in such striking and such truthful colours the destitute condition of the Scotch poor, that it at last attracted the notice of Government. A commission was issued, which took evidence and reported in favour of the change, and a bill was introduced by the Lord Advocate, founded on its recommendations, which, after encountering great opposition, at length passed into a law.

30. By this bill the axe was so far laid to the root of the evil, as that

the irresponsible administration of the poor-laws was taken out of the hands of the heritors and kirk-sessions, who had hitherto conducted it. A Board of Supervision was appointed at Edinburgh, with the able and accomplished Oriental diplomatist, SIR JOHN McNEILL, at its head, to superintend generally the administration of the poor over the whole country, and with power, at very little expense, to fix the rate of alimony to be awarded to paupers. A power was given to the sheriffs to review the decisions of the parochial boards in admitting or refusing to put applicants on the roll, and to decide litigated points between parish and parish. Parish boards were appointed to be elected by the ratepayers above £5 a-year, who administered the whole poor-laws in the first instance, and various provisions were made for the maintenance of lunatics, the education of pauper children, for medical attendance to the poor, and building poor-houses in large cities. So far the provisions of the Act were admirable, and they applied a remedy where it was most needed in taking the irresponsible administration of the poor-laws out of the hands of the heritors and kirk-sessions. But in one essential respect it contained a grievous defect, which has been severely felt since. It said nothing as to the *able-bodied poor*, probably because, by a solemn decision of the Court of Session in 1804, it had been determined that the poor able to work, but unable by their labour to earn a subsistence, from high prices, were entitled to relief. Had this precedent been followed, it would all have been well; but unfortunately, a few years after the new Act had passed, the Court of Session, having the English poor-laws and the French *ateliers nationaux* before their eyes, reversed their former decision, and held by a majority* that the able-bodied poor had no claim on the parish funds; and this decision was affirmed by Lord Truro in the House of Peers. The effect of this judgment has been to establish a most painful and undeserved dis-

* Lord Jeffrey, Lord Robertson, and Lord Fullerton, were in the minority.

inction between the situation of the poor in England, and Ireland, and Scotland; for while in the two former countries the able-bodied are entitled to relief when out of work, in the latter they have no such right. No words can exaggerate the disastrous effects of this state of things, in a country where so large a portion of the working-classes are often thrown out of employment from the effect of commercial or monetary crises, and the strikes in the manufacturing districts, which render destitute thousands not concerned in them, but dependent on the combined workmen. A painful example of this occurred within three years of the passing of the Scotch Poor-Law Act; for in the year 1847, while in England 1,626,201 poor were relieved, of whom 666,338 were able-bodied, and in Ireland above 900,000, in Glasgow and its immediate vicinity above 130,000 poor were out of employment, including the families of the labourers, without any claim whatever on the funds of public charity.*

* The statute law of Scotland seems to be noways chargeable with this anomalous and most distressing state of things, for it has declared the right of able-bodied poor to relief if destitute, as well as the aged, sick, and impotent, in as express terms as words can do, by the ruling Act on the subject, which was nearly contemporary with the 42d Elizabeth, which established the English poor-laws, the Act 1579, c. 74, entitled "For punishment of the strong and idle beggars, and relief of the poor and impotent." The laws directed to be made up for sustentation are, "all aged poor, impotent, and decayed persons born within the parish, or having their most common resort there in the last seven years, and who of necessity must live by alms." The justices are to inquire if they be diseased or whole and able in body, and thereupon to consider what their needful sustentation must amount to, and to tax or stint the whole inhabitants of the parish according to their means and substance therefor. And it directs that if the aged and impotent persons not being so lame, diseased, or impotent, but that they may work at some manner of work, shall

ordains "that strong beggars and their bairns be employed in common work during their lifetimes, and the power thereof is granted to the particular session of the kirk." Moreover, the Act 1663, c. 26, authorises all persons having set up manufactories to apprehend vagabonds who shall be found

31. If ever the necessity and expedience of any legislative change was decisively demonstrated by experience, it is this great alteration in the parochial law of Scotland. Since the new law came into operation in 1846, the poor relieved have, on an average, been from 80,000 to 100,000, being about 1 in 27 of the population, and

or who, being masterless and out of employment, have not wherewithal to maintain themselves by their own means or work, and to employ them for their service as they shall see fit: "and it enacts that the parishes where they have haunted three years immediately preceding their being so apprehended, and who are thereby relieved of the burden of them," shall pay to the persons employing them 2s. Scots a-day. And in a proclamation of the Privy Council, dated 11th August 1802, it is ordained that, "if any of the poor are able to work, the heritors of the parish are required to put them to work according to their capacities, furnishing them with meat and clothes; and if any child under fifteen be found begging, any person who shall take him before the heritors and elders, and engage to educate him to trade or work, the said child shall be obliged to serve such person for meat and clothes until he pass his thirtieth year." In conformity with these enactments, the Court of Session solemnly decided, in the case of *Darling v. Heritors of Dunse*, 19th November 1804, that an able-bodied man, capable of working and actually employed, but unable, from the high price of provision, to earn a livelihood, has a legal claim to parochial relief. This decision was held to fix the law to the effect that the able-bodied poor unable to earn a subsistence had a legal claim for relief; and so the law is laid down by Baron Hume, the highest legal authority in Scotland in recent times. The law, accordingly, was so applied by the Sheriff of Lanarkshire in 1848, when in that county 39,000 able-bodied poor were thrown out of employment, and, with their families, at least 90,000 more, were in a state of starvation. The Court of Session, however, reversed this judgment by a majority, holding that the able-bodied poor, by the Scotch law, have no claim for relief either for themselves or their dependent children, though the parochial boards, if they think fit, are entitled to give such relief in these cases. On this decision Mr Nicholl, the able administrator of the English and Irish poor-law, observes: "To maintain the exclusion of able-bodied persons from legal relief in cases like those of Paisley, is practically to withhold it from the most distressed, who nevertheless must be supported in some way. May we not ask, therefore, whether provision ought not to be made for doing that with equity, and which will otherwise be done inequitably and with disorder—whether relief should not be provided promptly, efficiently, and fairly, rather than tardily and inefficiently?"—NICHOLL'S *Scotch Poor-Law*, p. 134.

the cost of their maintenance has gradually risen from about £300,000 to about £700,000 a-year, being at last about a tenth, or 2s. in the pound, on the rental of the country.* Every person at all acquainted with the state of Scotland and the dispositions of its inhabitants, must be aware that this large number of persons has been relieved, and these unwonted sums expended, in spite of the most rigid economy on the part of the parochial boards in the administration of the poor's funds, and the utmost efforts to resist any increase in the expenditure. The increase has arisen entirely from the absolute necessity for parochial relief which invariably takes place in every country when it reaches a certain stage in civilisation and manufacturing industry. It is painful to think that it was so long and unnecessarily delayed.†

32. No questions which strongly excited party spirit, but were of little consequence in a general point of view, came before Parliament during the preceding session. The first of these was a charge brought against Sir James Graham, as Home Secretary, of having, for State purposes, ordered some letters posted by two foreign refugees and from two English Chartists, to be opened. The accusation, which was of a kind violently to agitate the public mind, was brought forward by Mr Thomas Duncombe on the 14th June, and Sir James wisely consented to the matter being referred to a select committee. In the interval between the question being mooted and the report of the committee, the utmost efforts were made by the Whig-Radical press to excite the public mind on the subject, and the clamour from one end of the kingdom to the other soon became excessive. Every one feared that his private correspondence would be looked into by the prying and inquisitive Post-office officials. But the report of the committee soon put an end to this uproar.

* In 1863 the sum expended on the relief of poor was £736,028.—*Statistical Abstract*, No. xl., p. 38.

† See footnote, next page.

From it it appeared that, so far from being illegal, the opening of letters by authority of Government was expressly authorised in the Acts establishing the Post-office; that this power had been since repeatedly confirmed, especially at the accession of Queen Victoria; that it had been exercised often by Whig Ministers, and particularly Mr Fox, in 1782; that from 1799 to 1844 the warrants for opening letters had been on an average *only eight* in the year; and that the power thus legally conferred and sparingly exer-

TABLE OF POOR-LAW ADMINISTRATION, 1846-56.

Years.	NUMBER OF POOR.							
	Registered Poor relieved.	Registered Poor at date.	Casual Poor relieved during the Year.	No. of Poor refused Relief.	No. of such Poor relieved under order of Sheriff.	No. of Poor removed to England or Ireland, or to other Parishes.	No. of Insane or Fatuous Poor.	No. of Orphans or Deserted Children.
1846	..	69,432	26,894	..	..	..	..	..
1847	85,971	74,161	60,399	5,841	565	8,453	2945	4794
1848	100,961	77,730	120,684	8,577	766	13,733	3480	6121
1849	106,434	82,357	95,686	15,395	768	9,396	3574	7459
1850	101,454	79,031	53,070	14,235	604	6,306	3421	7969
1851	99,777	76,906	42,023	9,264	406	5,102	3520	7542
1852	99,637	75,111	46,031	7,627	399	5,253	3634	7681
1853	99,609	75,437	49,658	7,045	368	2,415	3787	8338
1854	103,777	78,920	34,951	6,473	294	3,056	3893	8280
1855	100,550	70,887	42,863	5,757	241	2,163	4292	8955
1856	99,363	79,973	38,020	5,603	256	1,898	4487	8620
Incr.	..	86	..	..	15	..	195	..
Decr.	1,197	..	4,843	4	..	465	..	335

Years.	EXPENDITURE.							
	Poor on Roll.	Casual Poor.	Medical Relief.	Management.	Law Expenses.	Buildings.	Sanitary Measures.	Total.
1846	£ 246,542	£ 24,033	£ 4,055	£ 17,454	£ 2,545	£ ..	£ ..	£ 295,232
1847	336,515	36,340	12,879	43,158	5,022	..	..	433,915
1848	401,885	53,384	30,339	42,339	5,719	10,971	..	544,334
1849	417,462	51,470	33,010	51,804	8,519	14,775	..	577,044
1850	414,600	31,556	20,574	50,831	10,660	42,814	4384	591,553
1851	404,298	25,917	20,311	52,009	10,872	21,576	1038	534,943
1852	401,954	25,986	21,436	51,744	13,266	21,186	393	535,868
1853	411,135	24,114	21,737	52,352	13,036	21,644	532	544,552
1854	428,708	24,386	27,874	56,068	9,786	25,850	6259	578,028
1855	461,243	27,356	27,166	58,767	10,290	20,005	6355	611,784
1856	406,689	22,188	24,008	61,462	8,474	24,847	1675	629,348
Incr.	25,446	..	..	2,694	..	4,242	4677	17,563
Decr.	..	5,167	3,158	..	1,815	..	..	..

—*Scotch Poor-Law Commissioners' Report, 1856, January 1857.*—It is a curious and apparently unaccountable circumstance how much more expensive the cost of criminal prisoners is than that of innocent paupers. The cost of the Scotch paupers, from the above Tables, is from £5 to £6 a-head; and the English is just the same, the poor-rate being from £5,000,000 to £6,000,000 for the maintenance of 900,000 to 1,000,000 paupers. But the average cost of maintaining a criminal prisoner in Scotland is £16, 18s., deducting his earnings; and in Millbank Penitentiary it is £47, also deducting earnings. It is true, the prisoners for crimes are fed up in a way to which the paupers are strangers; for while the innocent pauper gets 38 ounces of solid nourishment in a week, the committed thief gets 60, the convicted thief 96, and the transported thief 160! This extraordinary fact is brought out in the very able and interesting reports of Mr Channing on the English Poor-Laws for 1839, p. 179.

discussed was essential to the safety of the State, and the preventing foreign or domestic conspiracies. This report effectually calmed the public mind and silenced the Radical press; and the public satisfaction was increased by a statement of the Duke of Wellington in the House of Peers, that there was no foundation for the report that the thing had been done at the instigation of a foreign power.

33. Connected with this was another subject, also disposed of in the same session of Parliament. The Alien Act had been little more than a dead letter for a number of years, chiefly in consequence of its containing no provision compelling foreigners to register their names, and of the number in consequence who avoided doing so. In 1842, out of 11,600 foreigners known officially to have landed, only 6084 were registered; out of 794 landed at Hull in that year, only one was registered; out of 1174 at Southampton, not one. In these circumstances, it was apparently not without reason thought that the time had arrived when the restrictions on aliens might be altogether removed. A bill to this effect was accordingly brought forward by Mr Hutt, from the Liberal benches, which enabled all foreigners at a trifling cost to obtain letters of naturalisation conferring upon them all the privileges of British subjects, except those of sitting in the Privy Council or in either House of Parliament. So completely had the feeling against foreigners expired in Great Britain, and so thoroughly was the Continent thought to be pacified, that this important relaxation of former policy excited very little attention, and was scarcely noticed even in the public newspapers. And yet the world was on the eve of the Revolution of 1848, the almost entire *bouleversement* of the Continent, and the Chartist insurrection in Great Britain!—so widely different is sometimes the under-current flowing in human affairs from what appears and attracts the attention of the legislature on the surface.

34. During the whole of 1844 and 1845, the efforts of the Anti-Corn-Law

League to keep alive agitation in the country on the subject of the import duties on grain were incessant, and attended with the most important effects. It is true, a great part of the facts to which they had formerly so triumphantly referred, in support of their argument, had now slipped from their grasp. It had become evident that the high prices of grain from 1838 to 1842 had been owing to a succession of bad harvests, and that there was no reason to suppose that in ordinary seasons the nation could not, within its own bounds, supply itself with food. The harvest in the present year was not particularly good, and the importation of wheat was only 313,000 quarters, and yet its price, up to the month of May, was only 46s. the quarter.* But though deprived of the powerful argument for a free importation of grain arising from high prices, the Anti-Corn-Law League found a full compensation for its loss in the general prosperity of the nation, and the embarrassments in which, from low prices, the agricultural interest was involved. Their lecturers and itinerant orators, many of whom were men of great ability, skilfully turned this state of things to their own advantage. They represented the general welfare of the nation, and the high wages of labour, as the result of the application of the principles of Free Trade to all other interests; the depressed condition of the agriculturists, to the retention of protection on their own. The farmers were everywhere told that the low prices were *owing to the Corn Laws*, and could only be obviated by their removal; and, strange to say, this argument obtained very general credit, even with the agricultural classes themselves. So far was the movement carried, that Mr Cobden, towards the close of the session, himself moved for a committee to inquire into the causes of agricultural distress, which was only defeated by a majority of 92 in a House of 334. It was distinctly proved by the Conservative members, from every part

* During the three first months of the year 1845 it was only 45s. the quarter; the average for the whole year was 50s. the quarter.

of England, that the distress among the farmers from low prices was not light and partial, but general and severe—a state of things which the more reflecting among them ascribed to Sir R. Peel's new sliding-scale affording no adequate protection to rural industry.

• 35. So general had distress now become among the agricultural interest, that Mr Cobden said in his opening speech on this debate, that one-half of the farmers in England were in a state of insolvency, and the other half paying their rents out of their capital—assertions which were not contradicted from either side of the House. A few nights after his motion had been disposed of, Mr Miles, a Protectionist, moved that the surplus of the revenue should be applied to the relief of the agricultural interest, now, beyond all question, the most suffering in the community. The motion was negatived by a majority of 213 to 78; but in the course of the debate some observations fell from both sides, which showed not obscurely the changes which were approaching. Sir James Graham, on the part of Government, said: “So far from being sorry that a progressive increase of importation has occurred, I consider it *eminently advantageous*; for, with the rapid increase of our population, many years will not pass away before we are in want of food, if we persist in refusing admission to foreign corn.” And Mr Disraeli said, on the part of the Protectionists: “Protection appears to be in about the same condition that Protestantism was in 1828. The country will draw its moral. For my part, if we are to have free trade, I, who honour genius, prefer that such measures should be proposed by the honourable member for Stockport (Mr Cobden), rather than by one who, by skilful parliamentary measures, has tampered with the generous confidence of a great people and a great party. For myself, I care not what may be the result. Dissolve, if you please, the Parliament you have betrayed, and appeal to the people, who, I believe, mistrust you. For me there remains

this at least—the opportunity of expressing thus publicly my belief that a Conservative Government is an organised hypocrisy.”

36. These words on the part of the two leaders of the Free Trade and Protection parties, sufficiently indicated to what crisis the country was approaching—what the one party intended, and what the other apprehended. So evident had this become, that towards the close of the session nothing else was debated in the House of Commons but the Corn Laws; and the declining majority for Protection showed that the waverers were beginning to seek their own advantage in anticipating what they saw was to become ere long the measures of Government. On June 3, Mr Ward moved for a committee to inquire into the situation and burdens of the landed interest, which was rejected by a majority of 73, the numbers being 182 to 109. Mr Villiers, on the 10th, brought forward his annual motion on the subject of the Corn Laws, and it was negatived by a majority of 132, the numbers being 254 to 122. But on a motion by Lord John Russell to go into a committee on the state of the labouring classes, with a view to the repeal of the Corn Laws, the majority was only 78, the numbers being 182 to 104. In the course of this debate, Sir James Graham dwelt strongly on the great fall which had taken place in the price of all the chief articles of consumption since the new tariff came into operation; and Lord John Russell declared he would not now propose a fixed duty of 8s. a quarter on wheat, but if called upon to say what it should be, he would fix on 4s., 5s., or 6s.* It was evident from these statements that the Corn Laws

* FALL IN THE PRICE OF THE CHIEF ARTICLES OF CONSUMPTION, AS REFERRED TO BY SIR JAMES GRAHAM.

Wheat had fallen from 64s. in 1841 to 46s. per quarter.

Beef,	from 7½d. to 5½d. per lb.
Mutton,	„ 7d. „ 6d. „
„	„ 7d. „ 6d. „
„	„ 2s. „ 1s. 4d. „
Tea,	„ 5s. „ 4s. „
Currants,	„ 9d. „ 6d. „
Candles,	„ 7d. „ 6d. „

—Ann. Reg. 1845, p. 84.

were doomed, and that it was only a question of time when they should be struck altogether from the statute-book. The session closed on the 9th August with a Queen's speech, in which her Majesty declared the "cordial assent" she had given "to the bills presented for remitting the duties on many articles of import."

37. In truth, the state of the country, induced by the previous policy of Government, and the long adoption of the cheapening system, had rendered the extension of the principles of Free Trade to the commerce of grain a matter of necessity. Prices of all the articles of commerce and production having been reduced fully 50 per cent by the monetary system, and at least 15 per cent more by the reduced tariff, it had become impossible to maintain a system of heavy duties on the import of grain. When the prices of all articles of produce—that is, the remuneration of every species of industry—had been lowered above 60 per cent by the measures of the Legislature, it became indispensable to lower, in some degree at least, the cost of the food on which the working-classes were to subsist. The Protectionists were quite right in imputing the repeal of the Corn Laws to Sir R. Peel, but they erred in their opinion as to the time and the measure which induced the necessity that led to that repeal. It was in 1819 that the policy was inaugurated, which could not fail

in the end to remove all restrictions on the import of grain; it was by unanimous votes of the House of Commons, including the whole Protectionists themselves, upholding the monetary system, that Free Trade was in reality established as the policy of the country. When Sir R. Peel introduced his tariffs in 1842 and 1845, so materially lowering the import duties, he only yielded to the necessity which he himself had introduced, and Parliament had so unanimously approved. In proposing to the Legislature the entire repeal of the Corn Laws, he did not adopt a new policy; he only gave way to the necessary consequences of their own acts. Sooner or later free trade in grain must have followed the contraction of the currency and free trade in other things. Some time might have elapsed before the change, in the ordinary course of events, became unavoidable, but meanwhile the hand of fate was on the curtain. Providence, in pity to human infatuation, was about to interpose visibly and decisively in human affairs, and those great changes were, on the eve of coming into operation, destined to apply a severe but merciful remedy to the miseries of Ireland, arrest the devastation of moneyed cupidity in England, give a mighty impulse to industry and improvement all over the world, and provide for the extension, in the remotest regions, of the dominant race among mankind.

CHAPTER LII.

ENGLAND, FROM THE PASSING OF SIR R. PEEL'S PREPARATORY TARIFF IN
• 1845 TO HIS FALL IN JUNE 1846.

1. PLANTED originally by Nature in the mountains of Peru, THE POTATO possesses the qualities which distinctly mark it as the destined food, in part at least, of a large portion of mankind.

It flourishes in nearly every climate except the very warmest and the coldest; more sensitive to frost than even the dahlia or geranium, it is to be seen in perfection in every region of the

globe except the tropics or the arctic circle. During the brief months of summer it makes its way and arrives at maturity in every part of the temperate zone. Its roots, in their natural state, are not much larger than a strawberry; under the fostering hand of culture they swell to ten or sometimes twenty times the size. It is far more productive, when brought to perfection by cultivation, of food for the use of man, than any cereal; it yields, on an equal space, three times as much for his sustenance as the best wheaten crop. Like civilisation, however, of which it is the attendant and the support, it involves in itself the seeds of corruption in its latest and most advanced stages, which threaten calamities as great to the physical necessities of man, as the depravity which often overspreads a wealthy and luxurious society does to his moral. But the wisdom of Nature has provided a remedy for the one as well as the other: like the human race, the succulent and prolific root can be propagated by seminal descent as well as by the transplantation of slips, and a new and untainted race be induced by the planting of fresh seeds in a region where the former has been degraded by a long course of artificial culture.*

* "This predisposition to disease in the potato, results, I conceive, from its having *degenerated* in consequence of its having been subjected to a long course of artificial cultivation. The potato, in common with all other cultivated productions of the vegetable world, has a tendency to degenerate when the laws of nature are departed from; and as it is not a native of this country, it degenerates in proportion as the means to prevent its doing so have been neglected. Nature, however, has provided for the permanent health as well as productiveness of her offspring in the seed contained in the berry which the plant produces from its stalks. Hence, when we endeavour to perpetuate any particular kind of potato, by continually cutting and planting its tubers, it may reasonably be expected that we shall injure its general properties and powers, and thus gradually render it less fit for frost, and more liable to disease. And long experience has convinced me that the taint far more frequently attacks the long-cultivated and more delicate sorts of potatoes than any others; the former, I conceive, because the vegetative powers have become disordered and enfeebled by a long course of

2. For a great number of years back the symptoms of the disease to which the potato, in the more advanced stages of its cultivation, is more particularly subject, had appeared in most parts both of Great Britain and Ireland; and in the latter country, where it constituted the staple food of the people, it had occasioned very great uneasiness and distress. The terrible scarcities, bordering on famine, in the Emerald Isle in 1823, 1837, and 1840, already noticed, had been mainly owing to this cause. It had always been observed that the disease was most rife in the richest soils, and in wet or stormy seasons. Frequent thunderstorms, and an electrical state of the atmosphere, had been generally found to precede the spread of the devastating malady. Its frequent recurrence and alarming symptoms in bad seasons had excited the attention of the observers of nature, and the most sagacious of these had already recorded the opinion that the root was wearing itself out, and that it *would not last twenty years.*"

treatment opposed to nature. In 1833 I raised from the berry a great variety of new sorts. In 1834 the best were selected and planted separately. At the present time, though planted late, and cut, they display an extraordinary degree of health and vigour; while beside them, in the same field, some of the old sorts are not only feeble, but tainted and curled."—*Quarterly Journal of Agriculture.*

* Talking with Dr Smith on the condition of Ireland in summer 1831, Mr Cobbett said: "The dirty weed (the potato) will be the curse of Ireland. The people must go back to the food they were accustomed to live upon before the general cultivation of the dirty weed—to grow wheat, oats, and rye. You have four millions of males in Ireland, and eight millions of uncultivated acres. This ground must be drained and brought into cultivation, and grow grain crops. *The potato will not last twenty years more. It will work itself out, and then you will see to what a state Ireland will be reduced.* You must return to grain crops, and then Ireland, instead of being the most degraded, will be one of the finest countries in the world. You may live to see my words prove true, but I never shall."—See DOUBLEDAY'S *Life of Peel*, vol. ii. p. 398, note. This prediction of Mr Cobbett is very remarkable—almost as much so as his memorable saying in America in 1819, that when he heard the Monetary Bill of that year was passed in England, he immediately gave orders to pack up his things and return to London, foreseeing that parliamentary reform could not be much longer delayed.

But in the summer and autumn of 1845 these symptoms manifested themselves in a far more alarming manner. The rains began early that season, and, contrary to what is usually the case, the ground was soaked by the end of July; but it was not till near the middle of the succeeding month that they set in with great severity. Then was seen what, under the existing monetary system, three weeks' rain in August can do in the British Isles. Hardly had the Parliament separated on the 9th August, amidst general congratulations for the past, and the warmest anticipations for the future, when the heavens seemed to open, and incessant deluges overspread the already saturated soil. These were accompanied by violent thunderstorms, in the course of which the electric fluid descended in sheets of flame into "the green and deluged earth." This wet and stormy weather continued, with very little intermission, through the whole of autumn; prices rapidly rose, and serious fears began to be felt for the grain crops. But these were soon thrown into the shade by the reports which were ere long spread of a mysterious disease among the potatoes, which threatened absolute destruction to that widespread and important part of the subsistence of the people. The plague thus introduced was, literally speaking, "the pestilence which walketh in darkness." It was so minute that it eluded the powers of the finest microscope—so mysterious that it defied the researches of the most searching philosophy; but it was strong enough to overturn governments, general enough to alter established commerce, powerful enough to cause the migration of nations.

3. Charmed with the advent of so powerful and unexpected an ally, the Anti-Corn-Law League made the utmost efforts to turn it to the best account. Their language and their tactics underwent an immediate change. It was no longer, as it had been for the last two years, to the sufferings of the farmers, arising from low prices, which they promised to elevate by repealing the Corn Laws, that they addressed

themselves; the loud cry was now raised that their instant abrogation was indispensable to prevent the people dying of famine. For some time past their funds had been mainly directed to increasing the number of Liberal electors on the rolls; and the Agricultural Protection Society, which had risen up to check its efforts, had boasted that the Anti-Corn-Law League had degenerated into a new registration club. Now, however, it resumed its pristine avocation of shaking and alarming the public mind, and this it did with immense success. Fifteen thousand copies of the *League* newspaper were weekly distributed; two millions of other publications tending to the same point, were circulated; three hundred thousand letters were sent out by the Directors of the Anti-Corn-Law Association in the course of the year. Covent Garden Theatre was fitted up in autumn as a great bazaar for goods, presented and exposed for sale in aid of the League fund. They brought £25,000, and 125,000 persons visited the magnificent establishment. Its funds seemed to increase with magical rapidity, as its necessities augmented and the period of its approaching triumph drew nigh. A meeting of the members was held in Manchester in December, at which a levy of £250,000 was agreed to, to further the objects of the League, and £62,000 was subscribed in the room. One gentleman signed for £1000; twenty for £1000 each. This was in addition to £122,508 previously raised by subscription. It must be confessed that the leaders of this great association made most extraordinary efforts to promote its objects, and showed themselves consummate masters of the art of agitating and ruling mankind.

4. Meanwhile prices of every kind of subsistence rose with extraordinary rapidity, and the real dangers of the period became such that there was no need of political agitation or imaginary terrors to exaggerate them. Wheat, which in June 1845 had been at 45s. 9d., advanced in price so rapidly that in November it was at 60s. Every other species of food rose in a similar

proportion, and these prices, to a people long inured to the low rates produced by the contracted currency, appeared to threaten famine. Every post from Ireland brought over fresh and more alarming reports of the failure of the potato crop, as well as the serious damage done to the general harvest by the heavy and long-continued rains. A transport similar to that which preceded the passing of the Reform Bill seized upon the public mind: it became soon evident that the torrent was for the time irresistible, and that in the mean time at least, and during the continuance of the potato famine, all duties on foreign grain must be removed. On 10th October, Lord Ashley addressed a letter to the electors of Dorsetshire, in which he declared his conviction that "the destiny of the Corn Laws was fixed, and that the leading men of both the great parties in the Legislature were by no means opposed to their eventual abolition." In the beginning of November, cabinet councils were very frequent, and it was known that Government had set on foot extensive inquiries concerning the failure of the crop; and about the same time Lord Morpeth joined the Anti-Corn-Law League. The accession of so leading a political character was justly considered as decisive of the views of the entire Whig party. It was no longer a question, save of time, when the change was to be made, and the two leaders of the opposite parties saw that nothing remained for them but to run a race who should first make the desired alteration.

5. An attentive observer of the signs of the times, Lord John Russell no sooner saw that the period was approaching when Government must take the initiative in the expected changes, than he resolved to forestall their leader, and bid for power by anticipating the Minister in them. On 22d November 1845, he addressed a letter from Edinburgh to the electors of London on the subject, in which he said: "The present state of the country in regard to its supply of food cannot be viewed without apprehension. Forethought and bold precaution may

avert serious evils: indecision and procrastination may produce a state of suffering which it is frightful to contemplate. Three weeks ago it was generally expected that Parliament would be called immediately together. The announcement that Ministers were prepared on its first meeting to propose a suspension of the import duties on corn, would have caused orders to be sent at once to various ports of Europe and America, for the purchase and transmission of grain, for the consumption of the United Kingdom. An Order in Council dispensing with the law was neither necessary nor desirable. No party in Parliament would have made itself responsible for the obstruction of a measure so urgent and beneficial. The Queen's Ministers have met and separated without affording us any promise of such seasonable relief. It becomes us, therefore, as the Queen's subjects, to consider how we can best avert, or at all events mitigate, calamities of no ordinary magnitude.

6. "Two evils require your consideration—one of these is the disease in the potatoes, affecting very seriously parts of England and Scotland, and committing fearful ravages in Ireland. The extent of this evil has not yet been ascertained, and every week tends either to reveal unexpected disease, or to abate in some districts the alarms previously entertained. But there is one effect peculiar to failure in this particular crop. The effect of a bad corn harvest is, in the first place, to diminish the supply in the market, and raise the price. Hence diminished consumption and the privation of incipient scarcity, by which the whole stock is more equally distributed over the year, and the ultimate pressure is greatly mitigated. But the fear of the breaking out of this unknown disease among the potatoes, induces the holders to hurry into the market, and thus we have at one and the same time rapid consumption and impending deficiency, scarcity of the article and cheapness of price. The ultimate suffering must thereby be rendered far more severe than it would otherwise be. Another evil under

which we are suffering is the fruit of Ministerial counsel and Parliamentary law. The duties on the importation of grain, passed three years ago, are so contrived, that, the worse the quality of the corn, the higher is the duty; so that when good wheat runs to 70s. a-quarter, the average of all wheat is 57s. or 58s., and the duty 15s. or 14s. a-quarter. Thus the corn barometer points to fair when the ship is bending under a storm.

7. "It is no longer worth while to contend for a fixed duty. In 1841 the Free-trade party would have agreed to a duty of 8s. a-quarter on wheat, and after a lapse of years this duty might have been further reduced and ultimately abolished. But the imposition of any duty at present, without a provision for its extinction in a short period, would but prolong a contest already sufficiently fruitful of animosity and discontent. The struggle to make bread scarce and dear, when it is clear that part at least of the additional price goes to increase rent, is a struggle deeply injurious to an aristocracy which (this quarrel once removed) is strong in property, strong in the construction of our Legislature, strong in opinion, strong in ancient associations and the memory of immortal services. Let us, then, unite to put an end to a system which has been proved to be the blight of commerce, the bane of agriculture, the source of bitter divisions among classes, the cause of penury, fever, mortality, and crime among the people."

8. Not less attentive than his rival to the circumstances of the country, Sir R. Peel, having received the reports from Ireland, which were extremely alarming, brought before the Cabinet the question, What was to be done to avert the threatened calamity? His own idea was to throw the ports at once open by an Order in Council, trusting to Parliament for a bill of indemnity. But his colleagues were divided on the necessity of such an extreme measure; and after several cabinet councils had been held in the beginning of November, it was agreed to appoint a commission to inquire into

and suggest measures to avert extreme distress in Ireland, and the Cabinet met on the 25th to consider the reports received. It was found, however, that the former division remained: a minority of the Cabinet, at the head of which was Lord Stanley, deemed the circumstances not yet such as to justify any permanent deviation from the protective policy of Government. Sir R. Peel thought otherwise: he was so strongly impressed with the dangers of the approaching crisis that he deemed it indispensable to make, not only a temporary but a permanent change of policy. As the Cabinet was divided on this subject, however, and Lord John Russell, by his letter from Edinburgh, already quoted, had declared for total repeal of the import duties, and put himself at the head of the Free-trade party, he felt the impossibility at such a crisis of carrying on the government in the face of such a coalition, and he accordingly tendered his resignation and that of his colleagues to her Majesty, which was accepted.

9. The Queen immediately sent for Lord John Russell: he received the royal command on the 8th December, and reached Osborne House, in the Isle of Wight, on the 11th. His answer to her Majesty, when requested to undertake the formation of a ministry, was, that as the party to which he belonged was in a minority in the House of Commons, it would be vain for him to attempt a task which would expose her Majesty, ere long, to the inconvenience arising from a second change of servants. He recommended the Queen, accordingly, to send for Lord Stanley, to endeavour to form a Protective ministry; but that nobleman, upon being applied to, declared his absolute inability to do so.* Up-

* "I informed her Majesty, that, considering that Lord Stanley, and such of my colleagues as had differed from me, had positively declined to undertake the formation of a government, and that Lord John Russell having had the concurrence and support of all his political friends, with a single exception, had abandoned the attempt to form one, I should feel it my duty, if required by her Majesty, to resume office."—*Peel's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 248.

on this the Queen renewed her application to Lord John, and showed him a paper which Sir R. Peel had left with her when he resigned office, in which he declared his intention, "in his private capacity, to give every support to the new minister whom her Majesty might select to effect a settlement of the question of the Corn Laws." This entirely altered the case, as it assured the Whig Cabinet of the support of at least one, and that the most powerful of the great Tory party. Lord John accordingly returned to town, to consult his friends on the possibility of forming a Cabinet, and at first there was every prospect of success. But ere long a difficulty, which proved insurmountable, presented itself. Earl Grey, upon being applied to, refused to join the new Cabinet if Lord Palmerston formed part of it—so strongly was he impressed with the hazard attending the foreign policy to which the latter noble lord was attached. Lord Palmerston, however, from his ability, and vast diplomatic information and connections, was too powerful a man to be dispensed with. The result was, that this attempt to form a Cabinet failed, and Lord John informed her Majesty of this on the forenoon of the 20th. On the preceding day, the Queen had informed Sir Robert Peel, that, as their political relation was about to terminate, she wished to see him next day to bid him farewell. He went accordingly, in obedience to the royal command; but, on entering her Majesty's presence, he was informed that Lord John Russell's mission had failed, and that nothing remained but for him to accept office. This he accordingly did, and the whole Cabinet resumed their places, with the exception of Lord Stanley, who retired. He was succeeded by Mr Gladstone as Colonial Secretary; and the Duke of Buccleuch, who at this crisis joined the Free-trade party in the Cabinet, was made President of the Council in room of Lord Wharncliffe, who had died on the 19th. The Cabinet was now entirely composed of Free-traders; and the influence of that party in the House of Commons, at the same time,

was much increased by the unopposed return of Lord Morpeth to his old seat for the West Riding of Yorkshire, in room of Mr Stuart Wortley, who succeeded to the peerage on his father Lord Wharncliffe's death.

10. While these ministerial difficulties and arrangements, big with the future fate of the British empire and of commerce throughout the world, were in progress in the elevated political regions, the public mind was violently shaken by an announcement, which suddenly appeared in the *Times* of December 4, to the effect that the repeal of the Corn Laws was resolved on in the Cabinet, and that Parliament would be called together in January to carry the resolution into effect. This statement was immediately contradicted, in the most unqualified manner, by the *Standard*, and other Tory newspapers; but the *Times* persisted in maintaining it, adding, that the repeal would be moved in the House of Commons by Sir R. Peel, and in the House of Lords by the Duke of Wellington. This excited a very great sensation, the more especially as it was known that the journal in question had very peculiar sources of information, and enjoyed the confidence, either directly or through the intervention of a third party, of more than one member of the Cabinet. Grain immediately fell, and the spirits of the League rose. They now everywhere announced that they were secure of victory, that they would accept of no compromise, and that "not a shilling nor a farthing should be imposed without sound reason shown." The sudden resignation, and still more sudden reconstruction, of Sir R. Peel's Cabinet shortly after, left no doubt as to some great change in the Corn Laws being in contemplation; and it was soon whispered that the Cabinet was now unanimous, and that the "Iron Duke" himself had reluctantly given in. Before Parliament met, on 19th January, it was generally understood that the cause of Protection was lost; and the question was set at rest, so far as the Cabinet was concerned, by the paragraph in the Queen's Speech on the

subject, delivered by her Majesty in person.

11. I have to lament," said her Majesty, "that, in consequence of a failure of the potato crop in several parts of the United Kingdom, there will be a deficient supply of an article of food which forms the chief subsistence of great numbers of my people. The disease by which the plant has been affected has prevailed to the utmost extent in Ireland. I have adopted all such measures as were in my power for the purpose of alleviating the sufferings which may be caused by this calamity, and I confidently rely on your co-operation in devising such other means for effecting the same benevolent purpose as may require the sanction of the Legislature. I have had great satisfaction in giving my assent to the measures which you have presented to me from time to time, calculated to extend commerce, and to stimulate domestic skill and industry, by the repeal of prohibitory and the relaxation of protective duties. The prosperous state of the revenue, the increased demand for labour, and the general improvement which has taken place in the internal condition of the country, are strong testimonies in favour of the course which you have pursued. I recommend you to take into your earnest consideration, whether the principles on which you have acted may not be yet more extensively applied, and whether it may not be in your power, after a careful review of the existing duties upon many articles the produce or manufacture of other countries, to make such further reductions and remissions as may tend to insure the continuance of the great benefits to which I have adverted, and, by enlarging our commercial intercourse, to strengthen the bonds of amity with foreign powers."

12. Such were the words by which Sir R. Peel, in her Majesty's name, announced to the world the greatest change ever made in the commercial policy of any nation; namely, the sudden transition from a Protective policy, the natural safeguard of a rising, to a Free-trade, the invariable demand of

an advanced stage of civilisation. His detailed plans were brought forward in a luminous speech of four hours' duration, the object of which was to represent the change in the Corn Laws, great as it was, as not an insulated measure, but part of a general system of policy by which all classes were to be ultimately benefited. The public excitement was extreme. Every crevice in the House was filled; Prince Albert and the Duke of Cambridge were among the auditors. "The great principle of the relaxation of protective duties," said he, "recommended in the Speech from the Throne, I intend to apply not to any one particular interest, but to all interests. On the contrary, I ask all the great interests of the country, manufacturing, commercial, and agricultural, to make the sacrifice, if it be one, to the common good. Of late the whole tariff of import duties has been more than once submitted to the House. In 1842 I commenced, and in 1845 carried out, to a very large extent, a plan for the remission of duties on the raw materials constituting the elements of manufacture. There is at this moment scarcely a duty on the raw material imported from foreign countries which we have not abandoned. I have, therefore, a right to call on the manufacturer to relinquish the protection of which he is now in possession. The only two articles of raw produce still subject to duty are wool and timber: on the first, I propose to reduce the duty from 3s. 2d. to 1s. 6d. a cwt.; and on the second, to make also a very great reduction. In regard to manufactures, I call on those who are engaged in making up the three articles, wool, linen, and cotton, which form the clothing of the country, to show the sincerity of their convictions in favour of Free Trade, by relinquishing the protection of which they are in possession. I do this the more confidently, as it was the manufacturing, and not the agricultural interest, which first called on the Government for protective duties.

13. "In pursuance of these principles, I propose to relinquish all duties

upon the importation of the coarser species of manufacture in wool, linen, and cotton, and to reduce the duties on the fine linen and cotton goods from 20 to 10 per cent. The duty on silk, at present 30, is to be reduced to 15 per cent. On a great variety of articles which enter into general consumption—boots, shoes, hats, gloves, dressed hides, straw-plait, carriages, candles, soap, brandy, Geneva, sugar, and various other articles—the duty is to be materially reduced; and in return for this, I think I am entitled to call on the agriculturists to submit to some sacrifice for the general good. What I propose is this: The duty on all seeds to be entirely removed, as also on Indian corn or maize, buckwheat and buckwheat flour. The duty on foreign butter, cheese, hops, and cured fish, to be reduced to half its present amount. Every sort of animal and vegetable food, apart from corn, to be admitted duty free, including all animals from foreign countries. All kinds of grain, after 1st February 1849, to be admitted at a nominal duty of 1s. a quarter, kept on only in order to obtain statistical returns of the quantities imported. During the intermediate period to 1st February 1849, the duties to be so calculated as to keep wheat at an average price of 50s. a quarter, and the scale adopted would, at the present price, which was 55s., lower the duty at once from 16s. a quarter to 4s.*

14. "To compensate, in a certain degree, the loss which these reductions will occasion to the farmers, I propose to make certain concessions, especially relating to turnpike roads, poor rates, and the support of criminals. Turnpikes in England are now under the direction of 16,000 local authorities, distributed over different parts of the country. I propose to compel par-

ishes to unite themselves into districts for the repair of the roads, in such a way as will reduce these 16,000 managers to 600—a change which will get quit of a great number of superfluous employes, save expense, and insure a better administration of the roads. The power of removability should be taken from every labouring man who had earned an industrial residence of five years in any manufacturing town, and from all children, legitimate or illegitimate, residing with the father or mother, where the parent itself was not removed; from all widows till twelve months after the husband's death, and from all persons become chargeable on the ground of sickness, unless it shall be proved to the satisfaction of the magistrate that such sickness or disability is incurable. These changes will prevent a large part of the population which has migrated from the country into towns, during health, being thrown back on the country when they become chargeable. Facilities will be given for the improvement of entailed estates by advances of Exchequer bills, to be repaid with a moderate interest in a long course of years. Finally, the cost of maintaining felons in jail, which is now a burden on the counties, should be defrayed by the Treasury. This will be a relief to Ireland of £17,000; in England, of £100,000 a-year; and the whole expense of the constabulary of Ireland, amounting to £539,000 a-year, is to be also laid on the public Exchequer. To compensate these advantages to Ireland, I propose to take on the Treasury half the medical expenses of the Poor Law Unions, which in England will be £100,000, in Scotland, £15,000, and to give £15,000 a-year for the education of the children in the work-houses.

15. "These are the proposals which I offer for the adjustment—the final adjustment of this question. I cannot appeal to any ungenerous feeling. I cannot appeal to fear, nor to anything which will be calculated to exercise an undue sway over the reason of those to whom these proposals are made.

* THE SCALE ON WHEAT WAS AS FOLLOWS:—

	Per Quarter.
Under 48s. the duty to be	10s.
" 48s. to 49s., . . .	9s.
" 49s. „ 50s., . . .	8s.
" 50s. „ 51s., . . .	7s.
" 51s. „ 52s., . . .	6s.
" 52s. „ 53s., . . .	5s.
" 53s. and upwards, . .	4s.

There may be agitation ; but it is not one which has reached the labouring classes, there being among them a total absence of all excitement. I admit, it is perfectly true, that without danger to the public peace we might continue all the existing duties ; therefore I cannot appeal to far as a ground for agreeing to those proposals. But this I do say, that there has been a great change of opinion in the great mass of the community with respect to the Corn Laws. There is between the master manufacturer and the operative classes a common conviction, that did not prevail in 1842, or at any former period, that those laws should be repealed ; and while there is that union of sentiment between them, there appears to be, at the same time, a general contentment and loyalty, and a confidence in the justice and impartiality of this House. The example you have set of taking upon yourselves great pecuniary burdens, in order that you might relieve the labouring classes from the taxation to which they were subjected, has produced the deepest impression and the most beneficial effect upon their minds. But because this is a time of peace—because there is a perfect calm, except in so far as the agitation among the manufacturers may interrupt it—because you are not subject to any coercion whatever—I entreat you to bear in mind, that this aspect of affairs may change, that we may have to contend with worse harvests than those of this year, and that it may be wise to avail ourselves of the present moment in order to effect an adjustment, which I believe must ultimately be made, and which cannot be much longer delayed without engendering deep feelings of animosity between different classes of her Majesty's subjects.

16. "What were the facts which came under our cognisance, charged with the responsibility of providing for the public peace, and saving millions from the calamity of starvation ? We were assured that in one part of this empire there are 4,000,000 of the Queen's subjects dependent upon a certain article of food for subsistence.

We knew that on that article of food no reliance could be placed. It was difficult to say what was the extent of the danger, what would be the progress of the disease, and what the amount of deficiency in the supply of food. Surely you will make allowance for those who were charged with the heaviest responsibility, if their worst anticipations should be realised. We saw in the distance the gaunt form of famine, and the spectre of disease following in its train. Was it not our first duty to avert the odious charge of indifference and neglect of timely precautions ? I declare in the face of this House, that the day of my life to which I look back with the greatest satisfaction and pride, is the 1st November last, when I offered to take the responsibility of issuing an Order in Council to open the ports, and trust to you for approval and indemnity. I wished then, that, by the first packet which sailed after the 1st November, the news might have gone forth that 'the ports were open.' During the latter part of December, and in January, there has been a temporary suspension of alarm ; but still the accounts we have from all parts of the country are sufficient to excite great uneasiness, and imperatively call for the present remedial measure.

17. "And now I come to the second consideration,—How, after the admission of foreign imported corn for a period of several months, do you propose to deal with the existing corn-law ? My conviction is so strong that it would be utterly impossible, after establishing freedom of trade in corn for a period of seven or eight months or more, to give a guarantee that the existing law should at the end of that time again come into operation, that I cannot encourage the delusive hope of any such result. It is an utter misapprehension of the state of public opinion to suppose it possible, that after this country, during eight months, shall have tasted of freedom of trade in corn, you can either revive by special enactment, or by the tacit operation of the law itself, the existing corn-law. Surely the very fact of sup-

pression is itself a condemnation of the law. It demonstrates that the law which professed, by a total reduction of duty when grain reached a certain price, to provide against scarcity, had failed in its most essential point. Could you, after this, insist upon a revival of this law? Would you revive the existing law in all its provisions? Do not suppose that those who advised suspension have overlooked the consequences upon the question of future protection. Do not disregard public feeling in a question of this kind. When the food of the people is concerned, public opinion can never be disregarded. Are you insensible to the real state of public opinion on the subject? Are you insensible to the altered opinion of many of your own party? Look to the change of opinion that has taken place, not among mere politicians—which you are apt to attribute to some selfish or corrupt motive—but look at the opinions now expressed, of the sincerity of which conclusive proof has been given, by some of the most honourable men that ever sat upon those benches. Their conduct affords proof that the minister who should suspend the law, and give a guarantee to revive it whenever the period of suspension shall have passed away, would have enormous, insuperable difficulties to encounter.

18. “Your precautions, however wisely taken, may nevertheless fail. It seems to be incident to great prosperity that there shall be a reverse, that the time of depression shall follow the season of excitement and success. That time of depression may perhaps return, and its return may be coincident with scarcity, occasioned by unfavourable seasons. Gloomy winters like those of 1841 and 1842 may again set in. Are those winters effaced from your memories? *From mine they never can be effaced.* Surely you have not forgotten with what earnestness and sincerity you re-echoed the deep feelings of a gracious Queen, when at the opening and close of each session she expressed her warmest sympathy with the sufferings of her people, her warmest admiration of their heroic fortitude. These

bad times may recur. The years of plenteousness may have ended, and the years of dearth may come, and again you may have to offer the unavailing expressions of sympathy, and the urgent exhortations to patient resignation—will it then be no satisfaction to you to reflect that, by your own act, you have been relieved from the grievous responsibility of regulating the supply of food? Will you not then cherish with delight the reflection, that in this present hour of comparative prosperity, yielding to no clamour, impelled by no fear, save that provident fear which is the mother of safety, you have anticipated the evil day, and long before its advent had trampled on every impediment to the free circulation of the Creator's bounty? And when you are again addressing your fellow-subjects, and encouraging them to bear without repining the dispensations of Providence, may God grant that, by your decision this night, you may have laid in store for yourselves the consolation of reflecting that such calamities are, in truth, the dispensations of Providence, and that they have not been caused, have not been aggravated, by laws of man, restricting, in the hour of scarcity and deepest need, the supply of food!

19. “You have a right, I admit, to taunt me with inconsistency in my opinions on this subject; but when you say that by my adoption of the principles of free trade I have acted in contradiction to those principles which I have always avowed during my whole life, I positively deny the charge. I foresaw the consequences which would result from the measures which I have felt it my duty to propose. We have not formed our opinion merely on local information. We were charged with the heavy responsibility of taking measures against a great calamity in Ireland; before we brought our remedies forward, we had taken every measure to obtain correct information on the state of that country. Whatever may be the result of these discussions, I feel severely the loss of the confidence of those from most of whom I have hitherto experienced a generous support. So-

far from expecting them to adopt my opinions, I perfectly recognise the sincerity with which they adhere to their own. I honour their motives; but I claim for myself the right to give that advice to my Sovereign which I conscientiously believe to be conducive to the general wellbeing. I wish to convince the people that the greatest object which this or any other Government can have is to elevate the social condition of those with whom we are brought into no direct relations by the exercise of the elective franchise. I wish to show them that our object has been to apportion taxation, so that we shall relieve industry and labour from any undue burden, and transfer it, so far as is consistent with the public good, to those who are better able to bear it. I look to the present peace of this country, to the absence of all disturbance, to the non-existence of any commitment for a seditious offence; I look to the calm which exists in the public mind; I look to the absence of all disaffection; I look to the increased and growing public confidence, on account of the course you have taken in relieving trade from restrictions, and industry from unjust burdens: and where there was disaffection I see contentment, where there was turbulence I see peace, where there was disloyalty I see loyalty. I see a disposition to confide in you, and not to agitate questions that are at the foundation of your institutions. Taught by this experience, I feel I have only done my duty to my Sovereign and my country in submitting the measures I have now brought forward to the consideration of Parliament."

20. No words can describe adequately the sensation which this speech produced in the country. The immediate reduction of the duty on wheat from 16s. a quarter to 4s., and its entire abolition at the end of three years, were changes so prodigious that they outstripped the hopes of the most sanguine of the Free-traders, and excited a profound feeling of indignation among the adherents of the agricultural interest. The impression upon the latter class was the stronger that

the alarm consequent upon the potato-rot, which had been very great in the preceding November, had sensibly declined in the following month; and accordingly wheat, which had been 60s. in the former period, had fallen in the beginning of January to 55s. a quarter. It had been discovered upon farther information, that the disease, though as bad as possible in some parts of the country, was as yet at least by no means universal, and that the apprehensions entertained of a great deficiency of subsistence for the body of the people had been much exaggerated. But above all, it was asked, "Why legislate permanently for a temporary evil? Grant that the potato-rot is as universal and serious as the strongest Free-traders allege, that may afford a good reason for throwing open the ports at once, by Order in Council, and keeping them open as long as the calamity lasts; but is it any reason for entirely altering the policy of the country, and permanently adopting free trade in lieu of the protection under the shelter of which it has hitherto risen to greatness?" The Free-traders, on the other hand, were in ecstasies, and regarding, with reason, the battle as already gained, would not condescend to notice the arguments of their adversaries, but contented themselves with simply vilifying and abusing them. These angry feelings on the one side, and exulting on the other, exhaled during the debate which ensued in the House of Commons, which lasted for TWELVE successive nights, and gave rise to more acrimonious expressions from both parties, but especially the Protectionist, than had ever been heard within the walls of Parliament.

21. "Sir," said Mr Disraeli, "the right honourable gentleman has supported a different policy for a number of years. Well do we remember, on this side of the House, perhaps not without a blush, the efforts we made to raise him to that bench where he now sits. Who does not remember 'the sacred cause of Protection'—the cause for which sovereigns were thwarted, parliaments dissolved, and a nation deceived—delightful, indeed, to

have the right honourable gentleman entering into all the details of what passed when he called upon his Sovereign! Would his Sovereign have called on him if he had not in 1841 put himself at the head of the gentlemen of England? That well-known position he took—a position to be preferred to the confidence even of sovereigns and courts. I say it without a hope of a party triumph, for I believe I belong to a party that can triumph no more—for we have nothing left for us but the constituencies we have *not* betrayed. I do say my conception of a great statesman is that of one who represents a great idea, an idea that leads him to power, an idea with which he has identified himself, an idea which he is to develop—which he can and does impress upon the mind of the nation. That is my idea of a great statesman. I care not whether he be a manufacturer or a manufacturer's son—the position is still grand, I may say heroic. But a man who never originates an idea, a mere watcher of the atmosphere—a man who, as he says himself, takes his observations, and when he finds the wind veers towards a certain quarter, trims to suit it—such a person may be a powerful minister, but he can never be a great statesman.

22. “There is a difficulty in finding a parallel in any part of history to the position of the right honourable gentleman. The only parallel I can find is an incident in the late war in the Levant, which was terminated by the policy of the noble Lord opposite (Palmerston). I remember when that great struggle was taking place, when the existence of the Turkish empire was at stake, the late Sultan, a man of great energy and resources, was determined to fit out an immense fleet to maintain his empire. A vast armament was accordingly collected. It consisted of many of the finest ships that ever were built. The crews were picked men, the officers were the ablest that could be found, and both officers and men were rewarded before they fought. Never did an armament similarly appointed leave the Dardanelles since

the days of Solyman the Magnificent. The Sultan personally witnessed the departure of the fleet, and all the muftis prayed for the success of the expedition, as all the muftis here prayed for the success of the late general election. Away went the fleet; but what was the Sultan's consternation when the Lord High Admiral steered at once into the enemy's port! The Lord High Admiral was called a traitor, but he had the talent of vindicating himself. ‘True,’ he said, ‘I did place myself at the head of this valiant armada; true it is that my sovereign embraced me; true all the muftis prayed for my success; but I have an objection to war; I see no reason for prolonging the struggle, and the only reason I had for accepting the command of the fleet was that I might terminate the contest by betraying my master!’ And yet such was the plausibility and adroitness of this Lord High Admiral, that he is at this moment First Lord of the Admiralty under the new regime.” (Sir C. Napier—“I thought he was dead.”) “The gallant commodore says he is dead; dead he may be, but at any rate he was not shot for treason.”

23. These violent speeches are too characteristic of the ulcerated state of feeling in the country, then exasperated beyond all precedent, to be omitted in general history; but they have no bearing upon the real question, which was, whether the proposed change was in itself necessary and expedient, not whether Sir R. Peel did right or wrong in proposing it. That question, however, did not want able advocates on the Protectionist side. It was argued by Lord Stanley, Mr Disraeli, and Lord George Bentinck: “From the earliest times—so far back as the reign of Edward IV.—the Legislature has recognised the principle of protecting native industry, as a reason for regulating the importation of corn; and it has continued to be the rule of our Legislature, down to the present period, to give encouragement to the cultivators of its own soil, in order to secure the independence of this country as regards foreign

nations for ever. This has not only ~~been~~ our own policy, but at the very moment when we are venturing upon the bold experiment of leaving the supply of the nation's food to chance, every other country in the world of any eminence is maintaining a protective policy. Sir R. Peel could not have failed to foresee the shock to confidence in public men of all parties which such a change as he has introduced must inevitably produce; but he has entirely overruled the emergency and position in which he was placed; he has confounded the brawling torrent of agitation with the deep still current of public opinion.

24. "The grounds assigned for the measure are the famine in Ireland, and the success of the changes on the tariff; but these reasons are inconsistent with each other. If this bill relieved the famine in Ireland, it could only be, by bringing down the price of corn to the means of the starving population of Ireland. You must distinguish between famine and great local scarcity. We were threatened with the latter, but not with the first, in the expected reduction of prices. When the question came before the Cabinet, I (Lord Stanley) yielded my own opinion, and consented to a *suspension*, but a *suspension only*, of the corn-law. This was all that the case required; for the prices showed that there was no general want of food in the country; and I could see no reason for altering a general system for a partial failure; but I stood alone. It is a total mistake to say that the sliding-scale has produced great fluctuation of prices; the fact is, that it has done more than any other legislative measure to prevent that fluctuation. Never were the changes of price so violent and frequent as before that scale was introduced; they then varied from 50s. to 120s. a quarter; whereas since that time the fluctuation has been from 39s. to 80s., and generally from 40s. to 56s. In articles of subsistence to which the sliding-scale has not been applied—~~potatoes~~ potatoes and cotton—the fluctuation of prices has still been enormous. The present corn-law has

kept us independent of foreign nations, and preserved an unprecedented steadiness in the price of grain; and no man can assert that these advantages have been purchased by the sacrifice of any interest. On the contrary, the constant complaint of the agriculturists during its continuance has been, that the prices of their produce, with the exception of very bad seasons, have been ruinously low.

25. "If the Corn Laws are repealed, the price of corn will fall greatly; we shall have an inundation of foreign wheat at 40s. a quarter. In what way is this reduction, supposing prices are forced down to that level, to benefit any class in this country? The *foreign* grower, indeed, will be immensely benefited; he will be furnished with profits which will ere long enable him to extend his production, and encroach yet more largely on the English fields; but in what state will the English agriculturist be, if, by the operation of that law, prices are permanently forced down to 40s. or 42s. a quarter? Will the manufacturer be benefited by the change? He can be so only by a reduction of wages, and if that takes place, where is the good that is to accrue to the working classes? Supposing wages to be reduced, and the cost of production of manufactures to be thereby lessened, and the market for them extended, so far from being a gainer, he will be a loser by the change; the British manufacturer will be a loser. Every acre *brought into* cultivation on the Vistula or the Danube will *throw an acre out of cultivation* on the Thames or the Severn; and what will he gain if he destroys the bread, and thereby ruins the market, of the cultivators who consume five pounds a-head of his produce, and 'calls into existence' an equal number of those who consume fivepence a-head?

26. "It is altogether a delusion to say that Russia, Prussia, and the United States do not take our manufactures because we do not take their corn. They do not take our manufactures because they wish to establish such fabrics among themselves, and

in the mean time desire to raise a revenue by means of import duties. These motives will still continue, although we admit their grain duty free. Rely upon it, that change will make no difference in their consumption of our manufactures. It is in our own colonies that we must look for the only durable and growing market for our fabrics, which will soon come to overtop all other markets put together; but this measure, so far from encouraging these distant offshoots of our empire, goes directly and obviously to injure them. It deprives them of all the advantages they have hitherto enjoyed as British subjects, by letting in all nations to compete with the produce of their industry. Destroy the principle of protection, and you destroy the whole basis on which our colonial system rests, which is, that the colonies are to be in a more favourable situation than foreign nations. You sever the strongest bond—that of mutual self-interest—which unites them to the mother country. It is an easy step for those who have been taught commercial independence to apply it also to political relationship.

27. "The principle of Free Trade can never be adopted in what has been emphatically called a Protection Parliament, without a loss of character to public men. The alleged change of circumstances during the last three years furnishes no reason for abandoning the settled policy of two centuries, far less for the Premier's deserting the principle he has strenuously maintained during the last thirty years. The doctrine of free trade is an absolute delusion: prolific of evil, it can be productive of no good to any party. It is simply, under existing circumstances, a preference given to foreign over native industry; and is that the way to benefit a nation? Even the manufacturing classes, to whom such strong appeals are made, will not in the end benefit by it. If the price of provisions permanently falls, their wages will fall with them, and what the better will they be when wheat is

at 45s. instead of 75s., if their wages are 15d. a day instead of 2s.? Will our shopkeepers be benefited if ten or fifteen millions are cut off from the rent of land that is the income of their best purchasers; or our manufacturers, if our rural labourers, who now form so large a part of the home market, are disabled from continuing their purchases of their produce, and the British merchants are sent to the serfs of Poland or the Ukraine to supply their place?

28. "The Irish famine, of which so much is said, is a mere pretence, got up for party purposes. There is not even a scarcity in the land. Prices prove this: wheat is at 55s. a quarter; oats at 26s.: are these famine prices? Why, in 1841, wheat was at 80s., and yet no one said there was a famine. The fact is, that the crop, on the whole, is fully an average one. The Duke of Wellington has admitted that there is no scarcity of food in Ireland, and Lord Cloncurry has added, that there is enough of oats in it to feed the whole people. There is in many places great distress among the peasantry, but that is not because they cannot get food to buy, but cannot get money to buy it with. Is it a remedy for this woeful state of things to admit the competition of foreign hands to flood the already overstocked Irish labour-market? The potato disease was in some places very formidable, but it was so only in a few districts. In Roscommon it was unknown; in Tipperary and Queen's County, very partial. The alarm spread by the Government Commissioners has been the main cause of the panic which has been diffused, and even of the losses which have been sustained; for they, by spreading evil reports, induced the people in many places to raise their potatoes before they were ripe, and thus caused them to rot. But suppose the immediate danger from the potato rot to be as great as the most devoted adherents of Government represent, is that any reason for altering the entire system and policy of the State on account of a *transitory* evil,

how serious soever? If scarcity is apprehended, by all means repeal all import duties so long as it continues; but it was reserved for the right honourable baronet to provide a remedy for a *dreaded scarcity in 1846 by enacting the repeal of all import duties in 1849.*"

29. As the interesting debate, of which the above is only a faint outline, continued in the House of Commons, the public interest went on continually increasing, until at length it reached an unbearable point of excitement. This arose, not from any doubt of the sincerity or wishes of Ministers, which had been unequivocally evinced both in the Royal Speech and in the course of the debate, but from uncertainty as to the issue with a parliament avowedly elected under Protection influences, and to withstand the first advances of Free Trade. Great therefore was the surprise of the nation, unbounded the triumph of the Anti-Corn-Law League, when the division took place at twenty minutes before three on the morning of the 27th February, and there appeared a majority of 97 for Ministers, in a very full house, the numbers being 337 to 240. The bill was finally carried on the third reading, on the morning of the 16th May, by a majority of 98. Hoping to conciliate the all-powerful Prime Minister, who had expressed himself as willing to make theirs an exceptional case, the whole West India interest voted with him in the majority on this occasion. They met their deserts and a just retribution at the hands of his successors within two months afterwards. The shipping interest did the same; one and all of them voted with Ministers. They did so, partly in the idea that a large increase of foreign importation would give great employment to the British commercial navy, and partly from the idea that the navigation laws were so essential to our national independence that there was not the slightest danger of their being touched. "*Ita dum singuli pugnant universi vincuntur.*"*

* Thus while they fight singly the whole are conquered.

Within three years they too were swept away. In the Lords the result was still more remarkable, for the second reading was carried by a majority of 47, and the bill passed finally on the 22d June. Considering that the great majority of the peers were dependent on landed estates, and that the effect of the bill in lowering prices was distinctly understood, this division must be considered as very remarkable, for beyond all doubt the greater part of their lordships thought very differently from what they voted. It indicates how great was the pressure which the Anti-Corn-Law League had come to exercise upon the public mind, how powerful was the influence which the Government and the Duke of Wellington possessed in that assembly, and what good use the Whigs, since their accession to power, had made of their time in neutralising the hostile majority in the Upper House by a copious creation of Liberal Peers.

30. The arguments adduced on either side in the House of Peers, were substantially the same as those adduced in the Commons, and need not be again repeated. But there is one short and characteristic speech, which, as coming from so great a man, and eminently descriptive of a leading feature in his mind, deserves to be particularly noticed. The Duke of Wellington said: "I address you under the disadvantage of appearing as a Minister of the Crown to press this measure, in opposition to the views of many of those with whom I have long acted in public life, with whom I have lived in habits of close intimacy and friendship, and whose good opinion it has always afforded me the greatest satisfaction to obtain, and indeed which I have enjoyed in the highest degree. I have already explained to you the circumstances under which I became a party to this measure. In November last, after the Cabinet to which I belonged had resigned, I considered it my bounden duty to my Sovereign not to withhold my assistance from her Government, and I resumed my seat at her Majesty's council, and gave my assistance to my right honourable friend

the First Lord of the Treasury, because I knew, at that time, that he would propose a measure of this description—nay, this very measure. It was this very measure which he proposed to the Cabinet early in that month. It is not necessary for me, my lords, to say more on that subject; and though some of your lordships may entertain a prejudice against me for the course which I am pursuing, I can justify it before your lordships, by telling you that I was bound to take it, and that if the same circumstances occurred to-morrow I would take it again. I was bound to my Sovereign and to my country by considerations of gratitude, of which I need not say more than to allude to them on this occasion."

31. This frank and manly declaration, coming from the old soldier who had grown grey in the service of his Sovereign and country, drew forth loud cheers from all parts of the house. It is highly characteristic of the ruling principle of the Duke's mind, which had appeared in exactly the same way in the crisis on Catholic Emancipation, and in that on Reform. On both of these occasions he accepted a seat in a Cabinet, and on the last the lead in forming a Government, which was to bring in a measure in direct opposition to his previous and often-expressed opinions. It would be uncharitable to conclude from thence that the Duke had no settled principles on political subjects, and embraced such merely as suited the circumstances of the moment. His whole life belies such a supposition; no man had more fixed and decided convictions. The truth rather was, that his habits of military obedience had rendered one feeling in his breast paramount to all others, and that was duty to his sovereign and country in moments of danger. This duty he felt himself bound to discharge, even at the hazard of his own consistency. If there is much to admire in this noble feeling, which certainly is that which should ever animate a soldier's breast, there is much to dread in it when it becomes the guide of a statesman's career. And this only affords another

illustration of the truth of a remark, which all ages have made, that the duties of civil and military life are often opposite to each other, and cannot, under any circumstances, be blended without imminent danger to both. The first duty of the soldier is obedience—the first of the statesman, deliberation.

32. Amidst the multiplied and protracted debates which took place on this all-important subject in this session of Parliament, the Budget was wellnigh forgotten; yet it presented some features of interest and importance, which foreshadowed the perilous course on which the Premier had advanced in repealing or reducing so many of the indirect taxes. It came on upon the 29th May; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer with reason congratulated the country on the flattering condition of the finances, which he ascribed to the effects of Free Trade, without any reference to the railway expenditure. Sir R. Peel had calculated the revenue for the year at £49,762,000; but the actual receipts were £51,250,000. The expenditure was £49,400,167, leaving an apparent surplus of £2,609,157. Of this, however, £750,000 was the payment from China, which could only be reckoned on for one year more. For the ensuing year he calculated on a revenue of £51,650,000: but, owing to an increase of £140,000 for the army, £600,000 for the navy, and £401,000 for the ordnance, which had become absolutely indispensable to restore these services to anything like a state of efficiency, the surplus would be only £776,000, of which no less than £700,000 would again be moiety from China.* It af-

* ACTUAL EXPENDITURE OF 1845, AND ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE OF 1846.

	1845. Actual Expenditure.	1846. Estimated Expenditure.
Interest of Debt,	£28,200,000	£28,100,000
Charges on Consolidated Fund,	2,400,000	2,500,000
Army, . . .	6,715,000	6,607,000
Navy, . . .	6,948,000	7,521,000
Ordnance, . .	2,142,000	2,543,000
Miscellaneous,	3,198,000	3,436,000
	£49,316,000	£50,973,000

—Ann. Reg. 1846, pp. 120, 121.

folded a melancholy proof of the chasm which the large reduction of the indirect duties had made in the revenue, that the only surplus in the ensuing year, which even the sanguine mind of the Chancellor of the Exchequer could foresee, was derived, after two years of unparalleled prosperity, from the accidental and transitory source of Chinese payments.

33. It was anticipated, and scarcely disguised in the course of the debate on the repeal of the Corn Laws, from the extreme violence of the schism which had taken place in the Ministerial majority, and the words never to be forgiven which had passed between the Ministers and their opponents, that it was only a question of time when the Administration was to be overturned. Such was the exasperation of the Protectionist leaders on the Ministerial benches, that it was known they would, for the moment, gladly coalesce with their opponents on the opposite side of the house, to eject a Government which, as they thought, had betrayed the party that had placed it in power. Yet so utterly at variance were the views of the ultra-Tories and the Radicals on all other subjects but their common animosity to the Premier, that it was not likely they would soon find a subject on which they could unite without such a flagrant dereliction of principle as might discredit and compromise both in the eyes of the nation. Chance, however, was more favourable to them than parliamentary skill could have been. A bill was actually before Parliament, which, it was thought, presented, most opportunely, the much-wished-for opportunity of uniting. This was the LIFE-PRESERVATION BILL FOR IRELAND.

34. Ever since the decline of O'Connell's influence, by whose powerful voice its troubled waters had so often been stayed, and the downfall of the temperance movement, the state of Ireland had become more disturbed; and in the latter months of 1845 and first of 1846, it had risen to such a pitch of outrage that some remedial measure had become indispensable.

This was the natural consequence of the dreadful state of destitution of food, towards which the wretched peasantry were rapidly approaching. When ejection for non-payment of rent from his little possession was little short of a sentence of death by slow process pronounced upon a man and his whole family, men placed in a position so dreadful, almost unavoidably acted upon the principle of self-preservation, and endeavoured, by violence and intimidation, to avoid such disaster. To endeavour to check such outrages was the first duty of Government; to remove their cause was the second. Early in the session, accordingly, Sir R. Peel introduced a measure by Lord St Germain's into the House of Peers, and the facts stated in support of it were of so appalling a kind as caused the bill to pass the Lords with scarcely any opposition.*

* CRIME AND OUTRAGES IN IRELAND.

	1844.	1845.
Homicides,	144	136
Firing at persons, . . .	104	138
Serious assaults, . . .	504	544
Assaults, common, . . .	242	251
Robberies of arms, . . .	159	551
Administering illegal oaths, . .	59	22
Threatening letters, . . .	602	1944
Houses attacked, . . .	254	483
Firing into houses, . . .	77	138

Agrarian outrages, . . .	1495	3462
Offences, violent—total, . .	3102	5281

The great majority of these offences were committed upon the peasantry or factors, the persons and dwellings of the gentlemen having been comparatively untouched.—*LORD ST GERMAIN'S Speech*, 24th Feb. 1846; *Ann. Reg.* 1846, p. 124. And of the savage unrelenting cruelty with which they were attended, an instance is given in *Sir R. Peel's Memoirs*: "A man and his wife of the name of Juttyll, residing between Drumonod and Molill, were, early on the morning of the 7th, visited by a party of six men armed with guns and bayonets, and having beaten the husband till he was senseless, they stripped his wife and put her on her back over some fire which they raked out of the fireplace for the purpose. This was for an agrarian cause; and so intimidated are the sufferers, that although it is supposed they know perfectly well the perpetrators of the outrage, they refrain from giving evidence."—*Sir Charles O'Donnell's Memoir*, June 15, 1846; *Peel's Memoirs*, ii. 303. With truth did the Duke of Wellington say, when endorsing this report, with many similar facts, to Sir R. Peel: "I am aware that the facts therein reported could not be prevented by the Assassination Bill; but they tend to show

It empowered the Lord-Lieutenant to proclaim any county or barony in which murder or attempt to murder had been committed, as falling under the restrictions of the Act. By this Act all persons within the proclaimed district were forbidden, under pain of the penalties of misdemeanour, to leave their houses between sunrise and sunset, and the Government was authorised to station an additional constabulary force at the expense of the disturbed district. The bill also authorised the Lord-Lieutenant to award a reasonable compensation to the family or representatives of a murdered person. It was stated that the vast majority of the outrages were directed against individuals on account of private vengeance or hopes of intimidation, and that they were mainly owing to the infernal system of secret societies. Sir R. Peel said, with truth, that these societies had gone such a length "that there are many parts of Ireland in which no man's life is safe, *except indeed the life of an assassin.*" * So evident was the necessity of the measure, that it met with no resistance, but, on the contrary, the most cordial support, from the Opposition in the House of Peers. Lord Lansdowne "could not think of offering any opposition to a measure so imperatively called for at the present moment. He hoped it would be followed up by measures of permanent amelioration;" while Lord Brougham thought "the case was so urgent that the bill should be passed with the least possible delay." It passed the Lords, accordingly, without a division, its duration being merely restricted to 1st October 1849, instead of five years, as originally proposed.

35. The fate of the bill, however, was widely different in the Lower House, where the vehement strife produced by the forcing through of the corn-law repeal had produced an ulcerated feeling in the minds of the Pro-

the state of society in Ireland, which is in fact worse than it is in any of the wildest parts of Asia, Africa, or America."—DUKE OF WELLINGTON to SIR R. PEEL, June 21, 1846; *Peel's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 302.

* SIR R. PEEL to DUKE OF WELLINGTON, June 23, 1846; *Peel's Memoirs*, ii. 306.

tectionists, which predisposed them to go into any coalition, how adverse soever to their principles, which might afford them an opportunity of manifesting their spleen against the Government. It was no easy matter, however, either for them or the Whigs, to form an alliance with any show even of decency to oppose the measure, for both were pledged as deep as men could be to support it. The Conservatives had been the first to introduce coercion bills into Ireland, and one of the most efficient of them had been brought in by Sir R. Peel when Secretary for Ireland, and carried through by the whole strength of the Tory party then in power. Lord Grey had followed this example in 1834, and introduced a coercion bill attended with the most surprising good effects, in which he obtained the cordial support of the Conservative opposition. More lately, Lord Morpeth had, in 1835, introduced a modified bill of the same character, which also, whenever it was put in force, had produced the effect of stopping the progress of agrarian outrage. Now, however, these two opposite parties, animated by a common hatred of the Ministry, resolved to form a coalition to throw out the bill, the one in punishment of what they regarded as past treachery, the other in the hope of future accession to power. When these were the motives which led to this coalition, it is of little consequence what arguments were adduced either in support of or against the bill, for on both sides the speakers for a long time carried to perfection the maxim of Talleyrand, that the principal object of language is to conceal the thought.

36. The bill was introduced into the Lower House by Sir James Graham on the 3d March, and, from the very first, experienced the most determined opposition. Leave was given to bring it in by a majority of 39, it being understood that no serious resistance was to be made till the second reading. The whole Catholic party, of course, denounced the bill from the first as uncalled for and tyrannical in the highest degree; and the debate was car-

ried on with such acrimony, that, after repeated adjournments, it was only brought to a first reading on 1st May, when it was carried by 149, the numbers being 274 to 125. The second reading stood for the 25th May, but, from the pressure of the corn-law debate, it was successively adjourned till the 9th of June, when it came on, and after repeated debates, was brought to a close on the 25th. During the course of the protracted discussion, it became very evident that a coalition of parties to eject the Ministry had taken place, and as the end approached the real feelings of the opposite sides oozed out, notwithstanding every effort to conceal them. The debate was far more on the repeal of the Corn Laws than on the Irish Coercion Bill. A brief summary of the arguments formally adduced, however, is necessary, in order to show on which side the preponderance really lay, on this, as it had now become, momentous question.

37. On the one hand, it was argued by Sir R. Peel, Sir James Graham, and the Solicitor-General: "The measure now proposed is undoubtedly a harsh one, and Government makes no attempt to vindicate it, except on the grounds of absolute necessity. But that necessity is unhappily too apparent. 1st, The extent, frequency, and nature of the crimes committed, indicate a necessity for a change of the law as it stands. 2d, The whole powers of the existing law have been tried and exhausted without affording any remedy to the evils. 3d, There is every reason to hope that the present bill will prove effectual in repressing the disorders existing, and which, in some places, have attained such a deplorable height. These disorders are not universal; they are confined to particular districts; but in them they have become such as to have entirely paralysed the arm of the law as it stands, and established, practically speaking, an entire impunity for crimes of the most atrocious description. It is not merely the number of offences, but the paucity of convictions, which is the alarming circumstance; but this

disproportion has now risen to such a height in the disturbed counties as absolutely to call for the interposition of the Legislature.

38. "The agrarian outrages are chiefly met with in five counties—viz., Tipperary, Clare, Roscommon, Limerick, and Leitrim. The population of those five counties, according to the last census, was 1,412,000 souls, while that of all Ireland is 8,175,124. Nevertheless, while the homicides in the whole country in 1845 were 92, in those five counties they were 47. The nightly firing into houses in those counties were seven-tenths of those in the whole country—proportions far beyond what the respective numbers of the inhabitants could warrant. Thus, when crime has so much increased in those counties, has the vigour of the criminal law and the conviction of offenders kept pace with the increase in crime? Quite the reverse: the ratio of convictions has come to be in the inverse ratio of the crimes. In these five counties, in 1845, the number of indictable offences was 1188, while the convictions were only 54! In Roscommon, within the last five months, no less than 383 indictable offences had been committed, and 8 convictions only obtained! If a special commission were now sent down to that county, what would be the result? Why, that nineteen-twentieths of the prisoners would walk away from the bar—a triumph to the malefactors—a reproach to the innocent sufferers under their crimes! Not less than 1100 or 1200 families in that county alone are living in daily dread of assassination; they know their enemies; they are aware from where they may expect outrages, but they dare not give information for fear of precipitating their fate. It may be safely affirmed that there is no other country in the civilised world where such a state of things would be suffered to exist.

39. "In former times similar local outrages have risen to great height in various places; but they were uniformly and effectually repressed by coercion bills similar to the present.

Every one knows the immediate and signal success with which Earl Grey's coercion bill in 1833 was attended, which in four months reduced the number of serious agrarian offences to one-fourth of their former amount; and the same may be said of the next coercion bill, which was found to be indispensable after the expiry of the first, and was brought in by Lord Morpeth. In 1835 all crimes of an insurrectionary character had ceased, but those of an agrarian kind had multiplied to such a degree, that in that year they amounted to the enormous number of 10,229. No sooner, however, was Lord Morpeth's coercion bill passed than the number began to decline, and when that Act expired in 1840 they were only 4069. With the expiry of the Act, however, they again increased, until in 1845 they had reached 8095.* It is impossible to resist the conclusion from these facts, that, however adverse to British ideas of mild administration, such rude methods of coercion are indispensable in the lawless and savage state which unhappily prevails in some parts of Ireland. And accordingly, though universal in its power, the bill is intended to be only partial in its operation, and to be enforced only in those counties where the extreme prevalence of crime calls upon the Lord Lieutenant to proclaim the Act. And experience warrants the hope, that the knowledge that the Executive is armed with these extraordinary powers, will have the effect of itself arresting the disorders, with-

out the necessity of actually putting them in execution.

40. "If present appearances are looked to, the prospect is still more alarming, and ample proof of its necessity has been furnished since the Act was introduced into the Upper House five months ago. The gentlemen opposite always refer to the *total* commitments for crime over all Ireland; and because, from the general prosperity which prevails, and the vast extension of the demand for labour which the construction of railways in Great Britain has afforded, there has been on the whole no increase, perhaps rather a decrease, of crime, they immediately arrive at the conclusion that the measure now proposed is unnecessary. But that is a most erroneous view of the case. The disease is local; at present it is confined to five counties; but there are no causes in operation there which do not exist in the rest of Ireland, and the malady is so fearful where it has appeared, that there is no saying how soon, if unchecked, it may spread over the whole country. In the first five months of this year (1846) as compared with the corresponding months of 1845, there is a great increase in those five counties; and the total of serious outrages in those five counties in the first five months of 1846 is no less than 2098.* If the same proportion should go on during the whole

* AGRARIAN CRIMES IN IRELAND.

Coercion Act passed.	
1835,	10,229
1836,	8,067
1837,	6,760
1838,	4,945
1839,	4,626
1840,	—
Act expired.	
Coercion Bill not renewed.	
1841,	5,370
1842,	6,535
1843,	5,870
1844,	6,327
1845,	8,095

—*Parl. Deb*, lxxxvii. 1015.

* GRAVE AGRARIAN OFFENCES IN TIPPERARY, CLARE, ROSCOMMON, LIMERICK, AND LEITRIM.

	First Five Months of 1845.	First Five Months of 1846.
Homicides,	20	26
Firing at person,	40	41
Serious assaults,	85	121
Assaults to danger of life,	41	58
Firing into houses,	46	—

INSURRECTIONARY OFFENCES IN SAME COUNTIES.

	Whole of 1845.	First Five Months of 1846.
In Tipperary,	114	368
„ Limerick,	402	248
„ Clare,	271	189
„ Roscommon,	659	471
„ Leitrim,	804	464

In whole year, 2890 In five months, 4440

—*Parl. Deb*, lxxxvii. 423, 427.

year, there will be a total of agrarian outrages in this year of 3013 against 2026 last year. The evil, therefore, though local, is fearful and rapidly increasing, and it behoves Parliament instantly to step in and apply that remedy which in former times has been found to be so efficacious."

41. On the other hand it was answered by Lord John Russell, Mr Disraeli, Lord George Bentinck, and Mr O'Connell, who, strange to say, stood side by side on this occasion; "Without disputing the existence of crime and outrage in some parts of Ireland, the real question before the House is, whether this bill is calculated to afford a remedy for them. If it was so, it would be entitled to the hearty support of the House. But if the real state of Ireland is looked to, it will be seen that a coercion act is indeed required for Ireland; but it is not one to restrain the peasantry from committing crime, but one to compel the landlords to do their duty. Government have the power in their hands; and if they would only take a manly tone, and adopt a temperate and dignified estimate of human nature with respect to Ireland, they might wave the wand that would turn her misery and poverty into prosperity and happiness. The disorders which are put forward as the justification of this coercive measure originate in the nature of the land tenure, and the anomalous relation between the landlord and tenant. There is in Ireland what is called the 'starving season,' which is about six weeks before the new harvest, and if during that period the growing crops are distrained, the labourers are deprived of their means of subsistence. They are prevented from digging; if their wives or children come out in the evening to take a few potatoes they are driven to jail; the husbands are driven to madness. Can it be wondered at that such a state of things is a fruitful source of crime—of crime, too, which did not exist in Ireland before the Union, but which is distinctly traceable to the exorbitant and unjust privileges conferred on Irish landlords by the English Parliament?

These causes of evil this coercion bill will not remove. Similar bills have been tried in Ireland, *seventeen times*, and they have always failed, and left the country worse than it was before.

42. "The real remedies for Ireland are to be found, not in a coercion bill, but in the removal of the causes which have produced the disorders. These measures consist in an adjustment of the tenure of land, so as to secure the tenant an equitable compensation for his improvements, a modification of the whole ejectment bill to check the wholesale clearance system, the extension to all Ireland of the local Tenant-Right in Ulster, a modification of the Grand Jury Law, an increased Reform in Parliament, adequate Corporation Reform, and a better distribution of Church property. Uniformly it has been found that the number of murders in Ireland is in proportion to the number of ejectments; and when it is recollected that 7,000,000 out of the 8,200,000 persons in Ireland live by agriculture, it may well be conceived what unbounded misery these wholesale ejectments occasion. It appears from the report of the Land Commission that from 1839 to 1843 no less than 150,000 persons had been subjected to the ejectment process. Imagination cannot figure the suffering which these ejections have occasioned. The serious crimes all originate in them; political feeling has nothing to do with them. They will never be eradicated, or even permanently checked, till the causes which have produced them are removed.

43. "The House of Commons has done too much for the Irish landlords, and too little for the tenants. The old English statutes in favour of landlords had not been re-enacted in Ireland under its old legislature; but by the 56 Geo. III., c. 88, passed after the Union, these powers were at once transferred to them. This statute, for the first time, gave them the power of distraining growing crops, keeping them till ripe, and selling them when ready for the sickle, charging upon the unhappy tenant all the intermediate expenses. There never was a more

the source of murder and outrage than those powers. This was followed by the 53 Geo. III., c. 39, conferring upon the landlord the power of ejecting the tenant, thus ruined, from his holding, the sole means of subsistence he had upon earth. The 1 Geo. IV., c. 41, still farther extended the powers of civil bill ejectments; and the 1 Geo. IV., c. 88, enabled them, in ejectments, to compel the tenant to find security for expense. Finally, the 1 & 2 William IV., c. 31, gave the landlord the right of immediate execution in ejectments, which still farther facilitated these ejectments. All enactments are in favour of the landlords; and it is in them, joined to the refusal to recognise the tenant's right to compensation for improvements, that the real sources of the outrages so much complained of in the south of Ireland are to be found. Accordingly, in Ulster, where this right is partially recognised, these outrages are, comparatively speaking, unknown. Remove these causes of evil, and violent crime will speedily die out of itself; continue them, and twenty coercion bills will never eradicate it.*

44. "The statistics so much relied on, on the other side, in reality prove nothing bearing on the present question. They demonstrate, indeed, in five counties an increase of predial outrages; but they by no means establish the necessity for any general measure of coercion, such as is now brought forward. On the contrary, so far as they prove anything they do directly the reverse. From May to July 1845 the amount of predial crime over all Ireland was considerably greater than from September to December.† In the first five months of 1845, the violent crimes amounted to 786; in the first five months of the present year

* The two last paragraphs are from Mr O'Connell's able and instructive argument.—*Parl. Deb.*, lxxxv. 524, 526.

† PREDIAL OFFENCES IN IRELAND.

	1845.	
May,		823
June,		
July,		708
November,		667
December,		603

they were only 554. The very crimes which this bill was intended to arrest have exhibited a falling off: in the first five months of last year they were 1701; in the corresponding five of this year they were 1356, exhibiting a diminution of 25 per cent in less than the first half of this year. Is this a state of things which warrants a measure of surpassing severity to last for a course of years? When the Ministers introduced it in the House of Lords, in February last, they described it as a temporary measure to meet a temporary emergency; and now, after the expiration of five months, they still press it forward after the emergency has passed away."*

45. During the progress of this important debate, which dragged its weary length along by repeated adjournments in the House of Commons, Ministers had frequent consultations as to the course which they should pursue in the event of the bill being rejected, which every day appeared to be more probable. The coalition between the Whigs, Radicals, and extreme Protectionists, to throw out the bill, and overturn the Ministry, had become evident, and it was more than doubtful whether all the influence of Government, and the popularity of its chief, would be able to withstand it. The Free-traders, with Mr Cobden at their head, voted *against him*, in return for his adoption of their principles; that gentleman, at the same time, "tendering him his heartfelt thanks for the unwearied perseverance, the unswerving firmness, and the great ability with which he had, during the last six months, conducted through the House of Commons one of the most magnificent reforms ever carried through in any country." Lord George Bentinck and the Marquess of Granby, the representatives of the ducal houses of Portland and Rutland, led the band of Protectionists, eighty in number, who voted against the Ministry; Lord Chandos headed a body of one hundred who voted with them.

* The last paragraph is from Lord George Bentinck's speech.—*Parl. Deb.*, lxxxiv. 778, 179.

Intense interest was felt in the House and the galleries, as the division took place and the opponents of the measure filed off, for the Conservative party was entirely broken up, and no one could predict, with anything like certainty, how the division would turn out. The result, however, was more decisive than the most sanguine of the coalition could have anticipated, for there appeared 219 for Ministers, and 292 against them, leaving them in a minority of SEVENTY-THREE. By a singular coincidence, two hours before this decisive vote took place in the House of Commons, the Lords had passed the Corn-Law Repeal Bill; so that Sir R. Peel's greatest triumph and his fall occurred on the same night, and within a few hours of each other.*

46. Great and unexpected as this majority was, it was rendered still more decisive and galling to Sir R. Peel by the character of the men of whom it was composed. The scene has been thus recounted by the hand of a master, himself one of the principal actors in the mighty drama which was now performed. "It was not their numbers merely," says Mr Disraeli, "that attracted the anxious observation of the Treasury Bench, as the Protectionists passed in defile before the Minister to the hostile lobby. It was impossible that he could have marked them without emotion; the flower of that great party, which had been so proud to follow one who had been so proud to lead them. They were men to gain whose hearts, and the hearts of their fathers, had been

* "Two hours after the intelligence arrived that the Lords had passed the Corn and Customs Bills, we were ejected from power; and by another coincidence as marvellous, on the day on which I had to announce, in the House of Commons, the dissolution of the Government, the news arrived that we had settled the Oregon question, and that our proposals had been accepted by the United States without the alteration of a word. . . . Lady Peel and I are here quite alone, in the loveliest weather, feasting on solitude and repose, and I have every disposition to forgive my enemies for having conferred upon me the blessing of the loss of power."—SIR R. PEEL to LORD HARRINGE, Drayton Manor, July 4, 1846; *Peel's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 310.

the aim and exultation of his life. They had extended to him an unlimited confidence, and an admiration without stint. They had stood by him in the darkest hour, and had borne him from the depths of political despair to the proudest of living positions. Right or wrong, they were men of honour, breeding, and refinement, high and generous character, great weight and station in the country, which they had for ever placed at his disposal. They had not only been his followers, but his friends; had joined in the same pastimes, drunk from the same cup, and in the pleasantness of private life had often forgotten together the cares and strife of politics. He must have felt something of this while the Mannerses, the Somersets, the Bentincks, the Lowthers, and the Lennoxes passed before him. And these were the 'gentlemen of England,' of whom, but five years ago, the very same building was ringing with his pride of being the leader."

47. Two courses, and two only, were open to Sir R. Peel after this defeat. The first was, to dissolve Parliament, and try the fortune of a new election; the second, to resign office. The first course promised no advantages; on the contrary, a certain accumulation of evils. It was impossible to expect that a Conservative majority could be obtained equal to that which brought him into power in 1841; on the contrary, it was certain it would be very much diminished. A great many of the English county constituencies would turn against one who they thought had betrayed them; all the Irish, which returned Liberal members, would unite against a Minister who threatened them with a coercion bill. Lavish in their praises of him for having adopted their principles, the Free-traders would be the first to vote against him if he retained office; the Whigs had cordially coalesced with the Protectionists to throw him out, and bring themselves in. Influenced by these considerations, Sir R. Peel, with the entire concurrence of the Duke of Wellington, wisely resolved to retire; and on the 29th June, these

two illustrious men announced, in the Lords and Commons respectively, that they held office only till their successors were appointed. It was the LAST TIME either addressed the House as the leaders of the Government.*

48. "In proposing the measures of commercial policy," said Sir R. Peel, "which have disintituled them to the confidence of those who have hitherto given them their support, Government had no other desire but to promote the good of the country. Our object was to avert dangers which we thought were imminent, and to avoid a conflict which we believed would place in hostile collision great and powerful classes in this country. The love of power was not their motive; for I was well aware that, whether accompanied by failure or success, one event must necessarily occur, and that was, the termination of the existence of the Government. I admit that the withdrawal of the confidence of many of our friends was the natural consequence of the measures we proposed; and I do think, when measures of that kind are proposed, at variance with the course heretofore proposed by Ministers, the natural consequence is an expulsion from office. I therefore do not complain of

* "In my opinion, the loss of the Irish bill, by whatever means, recommended as that bill was by the Speech from the Throne, declared to be absolutely necessary by the Queen's Ministers, sanctioned almost with unanimity by the House of Lords,—the loss of the Irish bill will make the administration of Government in Ireland impossible, because discreditable, by the present executive. There is an Irish party, a determined and not insignificant one, in whom British indignation has no terrors. Their wish is to disgust England with Irish objects and Irish members, and to induce England, through sheer disgust, and the sense of public inconvenience, from the obstructions offered to all other business in Parliament, to listen to the repeal of the legislative union, for the purpose of purging the House of a set of troublesome and factious members, who equally obstruct legislation for Ireland and Great Britain. In presence of such a party, the loss of the bill will be a signal triumph over the Executive, not merely of the Repealers, but of the disturbers of the public peace, and promoters of assassination throughout Ireland. I think, therefore, we ought not to submit to the rejection or the defeat by other means than rejection of the Irish bill."—SIR R. PEEL'S Cabinet Memorandum, June 21, 1846; *Memoirs*, vol. ii. pp. 291, 292.

it; anything is preferable to attempting to maintain ourselves in office without the confidence of this House. There has been a combination which, together with the influence of Government, has carried through these measures. But there is a name which ought to be associated with their success; but it is neither the name of the noble lord opposite (Lord J. Russell), nor is it mine. Sir, the name which ought to be, and which will be, associated with the success of those measures, is the name of a man who, acting, I believe, from pure and disinterested motives, has advocated their cause with untiring energy, and by appeals to reason, enforced by an eloquence the more to be admired that it was unaffected and unadorned—the name that ought to be, and will be associated with them, is that of Richard Cobden.

49. "I shall now close the address which it has been my duty to make, thanking the House sincerely for the favour with which they have listened to this my last address in my official capacity. Within a few hours the power I have held for five years will have passed into the hands of another. I say it without repining, and with a more lively recollection of the support I have received than the opposition I have encountered. I shall, I fear, leave office with a name severely censured by many honourable men, who, on public principle, deeply lament the severance of party ties, not from any selfish or interested motive, but because they believe fidelity to party; and the existence of great parties, to be powerful instruments of good government. I shall surrender power, severely censured by many honourable men, who, from no interested motives, have adhered to the principles of Protection, because they looked upon them as important to the welfare and interests of the country. I shall leave a name execrated by every monopolist, who, professing honourable opinions, would maintain protection for his own individual benefit. But it may be that I shall be sometimes remembered with goodwill in those places which are the abodes of men whose lot it is to labour

and earn their daily bread by the sweat of their brow; in such places, perhaps, my name may be remembered with expressions of goodwill, when those who inhabit them recruit their exhausted strength with abundant and untaxed food, the sweeter because no longer leavened with a sense of injustice."

50. These were manly words and noble sentiments, bearing the signet-mark of earnestness and sincerity, and worthy of a great minister taking for the last time the leave of the government of a great people. Yet must the truth of history take something from the brilliancy of the picture, and present the measures which he introduced, and which occasioned his fall, not in the impassioned words of earnest oratory, but in the sober guise of experienced truth. Such a survey will take nothing from the estimate which justice must ever form of the sincerity of the motives and the disinterestedness of the feelings by which the course was actuated, but add much to the difficulties with which its expedience is surrounded.

51. From what has been said, it is evident that the question, whether the permanent repeal of the Corn Laws, when carried through by Sir R. Peel in 1846, was or was not justifiable *on the reasons which he assigned*, depends entirely on the point, whether or not it was possible, after a temporary suspension of those laws, to have reverted to them when the danger had blown over. There may be difference of opinion on the question whether the potato rot in 1845-6 was so formidable in Ireland as to have rendered necessary the temporary suspension of the import duties; but there can be none whatever, that in the succeeding year the evil had extended to such a degree, and acquired such dimensions, as rendered an entire suspension of all import duties, at least for the time, indispensable. The real question, therefore, is, whether this temporary suspension rendered a lasting repeal unavoidable? Sir R. Peel maintains it did; because, he says, the nation, having once tasted of the blessings of free

trade in grain, would never go back to Protection; though he admitted there was no cry for repeal then among the working classes, and an entire want of excitement on the subject among them. There does not appear to be any ground for this opinion. The sliding-scale had repeatedly, during the last fifteen years, reduced the import duties to 1s., especially in 1841, when wheat was at 80s.; but no difficulty whatever had been experienced in enforcing the enhanced duties when prices fell. In former times, temporary suspensions of the Corn Laws, to meet temporary scarcities, had repeatedly taken place, and on their termination no difficulty had been felt in reverting to the protective duties.* This reason, therefore, put forward by the Premier for making the change permanent, in consequence of a passing calamity, was obviously ill founded. Whether or not the alteration had become unavoidable from a different cause—viz., the growing preponderance in the Legislature, as framed by the Reform Bill, of the commercial interests over the agricultural—is a very different question, open to much more variety of opinion, but which, however strongly felt in secret, was not in public put forward as a justification of the lasting change.

52. In truth, long before the Corn-Law Repeal Bill had passed into a law, not only was the necessity of any change after the lapse of years, so far as it arose from any real or supposed scarcity, passed away, but the terrors even of immediate want were found to have been ex-

* "In December 1756 Parliament met, and passed an Act discontinuing, for a limited period, the importation duties. In 1767 wheat was at 57s. 4d., and the first Act of the session was one allowing the importation of wheat and wheat-flour, oats and oatmeal, rye and rye-meal, into this kingdom, for a limited period, free of duty. At those periods importation was prohibited when wheat was below 57s. 4d., and from that to 80s. it was admissible at a duty of 8s. In 1791 a change in the import duties took place, and in 1793 an Act passed permitting the importation of wheat and flour at the low duties. In 1795 an Act was passed permitting, for a limited time, the importation of corn free of duty; and the same was done in 1799, the price being then 69s."—Sir R. PEEL'S *Cabinet Memorandum*, Nov. 29, 1846; *Memoirs*, ii. 189, 190.

trell exaggerated. So early as 13th January, before the bill was introduced into Parliament, the Duke of Wellington had called Sir R. Peel's attention to the important fact, that the price of potatoes in Ireland at that period *was only 6d. a-cwt. dearer than the average of the eight preceding years*—a state of things inconsistent, not merely with famine, but even serious scarcity.* Dr Lyon Playfair, and the Commissioners sent over to inquire into the subject in November preceding, had reported that half the crop had perished; but though this was the case in some districts, it was far from being so generally. Wheat fell in January from 60s., which it had reached at the height of the panic, to 55s.; and the judicious measures adopted by Government for the introduction of Indian corn produced so abundant a supply, that even in June following, always the most trying time in Ireland, the local authorities reported "that there is still abundance of provisions in the country; the markets, considering all things, are well supplied and reasonable; and the forethought and wise measures of Government with regard to the Indian meal are daily producing their desired effects." The coming crops look favourably, and promise more than an average harvest. A continuance of this system of relief for the next six weeks or two months will ward off the distress, famine, and destitution at one time so much apprehended." It is evident, therefore, that the apprehensions entertained of a general scarcity, even of potatoes, had been unfounded; and the crop of oats everywhere was immense. This state of things was quite consistent with very great distress, loudly calling for Government interposition, in particular places, but that was not because food, on the whole, was wanting, but because, the

* "In eight years, from 1838 to 1846, the price of potatoes in Dublin markets has varied from 3s. to 4s. per cwt.; the average prices for eight years being 3s. 6½d. per cwt. The price at Christmas 1845 was 4s. the cwt., not quite 6d. a-cwt. above the average price for the eight years from 1838. This is worthy of attention"—DUKE OF WELLINGTON to SIR R. PEEL, Jan. 13, 1846; *Peel's Memoirs*, ii. 264.

produce of their little possessions having failed, the people had no money to buy it. The remedy for this was not a prospective and remote repeal of the Corn Laws, but an immediate impulse to the wages of labour by Government employment, and when this was afforded, entire relief was experienced.*

53. If, from the reasons of immediate necessity put forward in support of the repeal of the Corn Laws, we pass to the more durable grounds founded on the state of the public mind on the subject, and the strength of the moneyed and manufacturing interest in the House of Commons, we shall see much stronger reasons to consider it as a measure which could not be much longer delayed by any Government. In truth, the demand for it arose from the silent change of time; and the existence of that demand was an indication that the time had arrived when Nature intended it should be granted. The very riches of Great Britain, which had grown up during a century and a half of protection, had raised the wages of labour so much in it, owing to the affluence of money from all quarters of the globe, that the manufacturers felt the necessity of some lasting reduction of wages, to enable them to compete with foreign artisans either in the foreign or the home market. The inhabitants of towns, whose gains had been seriously diminished by the monetary policy of Government, sighed for the comparatively cheap supplies of food enjoyed by the inhabitants of poorer foreign states. That very monetary policy, and the system of free trade introduced along with it, had been a part of the great design of *cheapening everything*, intended to obvi-

* "In many places, in the interval between seed-time and hay-harvest, a more than ordinary distress is felt by the cottars, especially in remote districts. In many places the want has been already anticipated, and met by the management of relief committees in donations, and the employment of the poor at public works. Where such arrangements have been made, crime has decreased, and the relief and advantages to the poor have been incalculable."—COL. O'DONNELL to Military Secretary, Dublin, June 15, 1846; *Peel's Memoirs*, ii. 305.

ate the effects of the accumulation of wealth in a particular state, and the fiscal burdens with which such accumulation is invariably, after a time, attended. To these consuming classes, whose interests were directly adverse to those of the producing, the Reform Bill chiefly, by the destruction of the nomination boroughs, the seat of the latter's representation, had given a decided majority in the Legislature. That very legislative preponderance was the result of the superior wealth, energy, and political organisation which had given them the victory in the Reform contest. The weight now acquired by the Anti-Corn-Law League was another instance of the same preponderance. Situated as he was in 1846, therefore, Sir R. Peel was right in his belief that the repeal of the Corn Laws ere long was unavoidable; for nearly all his urban supporters, who constituted his majority, were enlisted on its side. Whether *he* should have done it, recollecting his former professions, and what interest he was placed in power to support, is a very different question, on which probably the opinion of posterity will be as unanimous on the other side.

54. But be this as it may, one thing is perfectly clear, and that is, that it was anything but general free trade which Sir R. Peel introduced on this occasion; it was, on the contrary, a *retention of protection to the manufacturer, and a withdrawal of it from the farmer*. Wheat, after February 1849, was to be admitted at the nominal duty of 1s. a-quarter, which, supposing wheat on an average to be at 50s., was a *fiftieth* part. But the protection retained for manufactured goods at the same time was not a fiftieth, but from a *tenth* to a *fifteenth* part, which was equivalent to what from 5s. to 7s. 6d. would have been on wheat. This is a most important distinction, which, in the heat of the controversy, has been wellnigh forgotten by the Protectionists, and has been studiously kept out of view by the Free-traders. It was, however, forcibly brought under Sir R. Peel's notice by Mr Goulburn when the corn-law repeal was first

brought before the Cabinet.* Comfortably sheltered under protection, the manufacturers beheld with satisfaction, and greeted with applause, a policy which, for their benefit, as they thought, took it away entirely from the agriculturist. One would have supposed, from this, that the latter class had facilities for production, and peculiar advantages in competition with foreign states, which the former did not enjoy; whereas the fact was just the reverse. There is no steam-engine in the fields; coal and iron, all-powerful in manufacturing, are comparatively impotent in rural labour. We have heard much of the English manufacturers underselling those of Hindostan in cotton goods, but no one ever heard of English farmers under-

* "From the immense amount of our debt, and charges imposed on every interest in the country in respect of it, every manufacturer in this country has in justice a claim to be protected, as regards the supply of the home consumer, against the competition of a foreigner, who, not having the same charges upon him, is or ought to be able to supply articles at a cheaper rate. On this principle you give cotton and linen manufacturers a protection of from 10 to 20 per cent; and to this extent, and on the same ground, I see no reason why corn should not be protected. Nay, has not corn, on the same principle, a strong title to extra protection, on account of the mode in which both the raw material and the manufactured article are both subject to duty? It appears from the *Report on Local Taxation* (p. 27), that local rates amount, on the whole of England and Wales, to 2s. 8d. in the pound of all real property. But while 2s. 8d. is the general rate on real property of every description, including houses, it will be found that in agricultural districts the rate in the pound is much greater. On an average the rent of land is not above 20s. an acre; therefore 2s. 8d. on the raw material is 13 per cent. Relieve him from this charge, and freedom of import would be less important."—MR GOULBURN'S *Memorandum to Sir R. PEEL*, November 30, 1843; *Peel's Memoirs*, ii. 325. It is a curious circumstance, that while he saw so clearly, and has so well expressed, the peculiar reason for protection to British agriculture which arises from the peculiar fiscal burdens to which it is subjected, from which the manufacturers are exempted, he made no mention of the far stronger claims for protection, arising from the high-money wages of labour in Britain, owing to the riches of the country, and affluence of money, and the impossibility of capital and machinery obviating this inequality in agricultural as it can so successfully do in manufacturing industry.

selling those of Poland, Moldavia, or America, in the produce of the fields in their own country. The removal of protection from agriculture, therefore, and retention of it to manufactures, was not free trade; it was a simple act of injustice to the former of these interests. It does not by any means follow from this, that, situated as the country and constituted as the House of Commons was at this crisis, it was not a matter of necessity to adopt this policy. But it does follow that we may rest assured that any interest in the country, which, though neither the greatest nor the most powerful, has got the command of the Legislature, will force through measures which it deems for its own peculiar benefit, without the slightest regard to their effects upon the interests of the other classes of the community, or even, in the end, of their own.

55. Another circumstance, which is worthy of particular notice in this great debate, is the part which the Irish popular and Roman Catholic members took regarding it. Being entirely an agricultural country, in which seven-eighths of the inhabitants, and nineteen-twentieths of the wealth, was obtained from rural labour, it is evident that its interests clearly were to support protection to agriculture. Manchester or Glasgow might have much to say on behalf of free trade in grain, because to them it promised to lessen the cost of living and of production; but what had Clare or Rosecommon to say to it, whose produce was liable by it to be ruined by foreign competition? Accordingly, it stands proved by incontrovertible evidence, that within four years of the introduction of Free Trade, the produce of Ireland in wheat alone had been lessened by 1,500,000 quarters,*

* EXPORTS OF GRAIN FROM IRELAND.

Years.	Quarters—Of which,	Wheat—	Oats and Oatmeal—
		Qrs.	Qrs.
1845,	3,251,901	779,113	2,353,985
1846,	1,841,802	393,462	1,311,591
1847,	963,779	184,222	703,462
1848,	1,946,417	304,872	1,546,568
1849,	1,426,397	235,445	1,122,067

—PORTER, p. 345.

From Captain Larcom's Report for 1849, it

and that the grain of all kinds imported from that country into Great Britain had declined from 3,251,000 quarters to 1,426,397. Nothing is more certain, therefore, than that, whatever it was to England and Scotland, free trade in grain was ruinous to Ireland; and it will immediately appear that the prodigious emigration which has, since it was introduced, banished above 2,000,000 Irish from the Emerald Isle, has been mainly owing to the cutting off of this the best market for their produce. Yet the change, fraught with such disastrous effects to Ireland, which were thoroughly foreseen and predicted at the time, was supported by the whole Roman Catholic party in the House of Commons, themselves for the most part representing Irish counties. Not a whisper escaped their constituents; not a qualm of remorse came over themselves for such suicidal conduct. The names of Daniel O'Connell, his sons, and followers, are to be seen in the majority in all the corn-law discussions.* It belongs to the biographers or friends of the leaders of that party to justify, if they can, such extraordinary conduct, which was obviously dictated by hatred of England, not love of Ireland, and revealed too clearly a secret foreign influence. Observe, they supported the absolute and lasting repeal, not a temporary suspension to meet a temporary calamity. To the historian it affords a melancholy example of the truth, that representative institutions afford no security whatever for good government, unless the constituents, as well as the representatives, are animated by a pa-

appears the production of wheat since 1845 had declined 1,500,000 quarters in Ireland. When prices rose after 1852 there was a corresponding increase. The potato famine had nothing to do with this decline in cereal crops, for they were not at all affected by the disease which was so fatal to the former; and as prices rose from this cause, the only effect of the failure of the potato crops and general rise of prices, should have been a great increase of cereal crops, and in particular of wheat. And the harvest of 1847 was so fine that, at Lord John Russell's suggestion, a general thanksgiving was returned for it.

* See in particular the divisions on the Corn Laws.—*Parl. Deb.*, lxxxvi. 89, 721, and lxxxiv. 351.

triotie spirit, and alive to the real interests of their country, and that, under other circumstances, or when influenced by a foreign or sacerdotal influence, it may become one of the greatest evils which can afflict society.

56. If the conduct of the followers in Ireland of the Free-trade party is calculated to excite surprise, that of some of the leaders of the Protectionist in Great Britain appears, at first sight, to be hardly less so. The Duke of Wellington was clearly and strongly opposed to the repeal of the Corn Laws, and was the leader of the party in the Cabinet which, by refusing to accede to it, obliged Sir R. Peel to resign in December 1845.* The Duke of Buccleuch was the same.† Yet both these noblemen shortly after resumed office after Lord Stanley had seceded from it, on the understanding that the entire repeal of the Corn Laws was to be made a Cabinet question; and the former said emphatically in the House of Peers, that he was delighted with the Premier's resuming office on these conditions, and that he should, in his place, have done

* "I am one of those who think the continuance of the Corn Laws essential to the agriculture of the country in its existing state, and a benefit to the whole community.

"I am afraid that it would soon be found that this country would cease to be sought after as the desirable market of the world, if the interests of agriculture should be injured by a premature repeal of the Corn Laws. It appears to me, likewise, that this country is in a better situation than any other to bear the shock arising from the potato disease, and this even in Ireland. The evil in Ireland is not a deficiency of food for the year, or even of the particular description of food, potatoes, but the great and supposed general deficiency of that spread of food operating upon the social condition of Ireland, the habits of the great body of the people, who are producers of the food which they consume during three-fourths of the year in general, and who must consequently be in a state of destitution, and who have not the pecuniary, and if they had the pecuniary means, are not in the habit of purchasing their food in the market."—DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S *Memorandum*, Nov. 30, 1845; *Peel's Memoirs*, vol. ii. pp. 198, 199.

† "Lord Stanley and the Duke of Buccleuch, after anxious reflection, each declared his inability to support a measure involving the ultimate repeal of the Corn Laws."—*Peel's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 221.

just the same.* This conduct appears to be very inconsistent with previous and strongly expressed opinions; but it is easily explained if the leading feature in the Duke of Wellington's character is considered—that is, fidelity to his Sovereign in difficulty. This duty the old soldier, as already observed, deemed paramount to every other; and situated as the Queen was, after Lord Stanley had declared his inability to form a Cabinet on Protection principles, and Lord J. Russell had failed in making one of the Whigs, he held that he was bound to support her even at the hazard of his own consistency. He thought the support of Sir R. Peel's government of more importance than the maintenance of any consistency, the adherence to any preconceived opinions; and he saw no way of doing this but by going into his views on the Corn Laws. The Duke of Buccleuch appears, in resuming office with Wellington, to have been actuated by the same views. We may lament that circumstances should have come about which rendered such a deviation from principle unavoidable; but every one must see that circumstances may occur when it is at once the duty of the patriot and the path of honour to do so.†

57. But though these circumstances, joined to peculiar habits and a military life, may vindicate the Duke of

* "I was of opinion that the formation of a Government, in which her Majesty would have confidence, was of much greater importance than the opinions of any individual on the Corn Laws or on any other laws. My Lords, I received a letter from my right hon. friend, desiring me to attend a Cabinet Council that evening (Dec. 20), which I did. I applauded the conduct of my right hon. friend: I was delighted with it. It was exactly the course which I should have followed myself under similar circumstances, and therefore I determined, my Lords, to stand by him."—DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S *Speech*, Jan. 26, 1846; *Parl. Deb.*

† "My own judgment would lead me to support the Corn Laws. Sir R. Peel may think that his position in Parliament, and in the public view, requires that the course should be taken which he recommends; and if this should be the case, I earnestly recommend that the Cabinet should support him, and I for one declare that I will do so."—WELLINGTON'S *Memorandum*, Nov. 30, 1845; *Peel's Memoirs*, ii. 200.

Wellington for his sudden conversion on this subject, no similar apology can be admitted for Sir R. Peel. *He created the necessity* to which the Duke of Wellington yielded. There was no earthly necessity for repealing the Corn Laws prospectively in January 1846, to take effect *three years after*, whatever there may have been to open the ports entirely by an Order in Council at the moment. The engrafting a permanent change of policy on a temporary calamity, was a gratuitous and unalled-for measure on his part, which never should have been adopted but with the full concurrence of the party which had placed him in power. There was plenty of time to do so; he had three years to think of it and select his own opportunity for making the communication, and if not acquiesced in, resigning office without inconvenience to the Queen's service, and supporting Free Trade as a private individual. This is what the Duke of Wellington recommended.* Instead of doing this, he forced the whole question on at once; evidently taking advantage of the panic of the moment, to drive through a change which in cooler moments he despaired of effecting. This was clearly wrong. The mere change of opinion was, in itself, nowise blamable; often it is the highest indication of political sagacity, the last effort of political virtue. "*Tempora mutantur nos et mutamur in illis*" † is sometimes the maxim of integrity not less than discrimination. But it is one thing to change opinions when the former appear to have been erroneous, or alter conduct when it has become expedient to do so; it is another,

* "I would recommend that in the Queen's Speech the Queen should recommend a reconsideration of the Corn Laws, with a view to a suspension of their provisions, if that measure should appear to be necessary; and such alterations in regard to certain articles of food as may appear to be desirable, and may not be inconsistent with the principle and object of the laws."—DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S Memorandum, Nov. 30, 1845; *Peel's Memoirs*, ii. 201.

† Times are changed, and we are changed with them.

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and a very different thing, to betray a trust reposed by a party to whose support the acquisition of power has been owing. That is somewhat akin to what Marlborough did when he made use of the Guards, at whose head he had been placed by James, to establish William on the throne, or Ney when he left Paris to take the command of the royal army at Metun, promising to bring Napoleon back in an iron cage. Had he *resigned office*, and then supported free-trade principles, the Tories might have lamented his change of opinion, but they could not have assailed his honour. But no royal solicitation or state necessity will over, in the eyes of posterity, vindicate a general who deserts his colours on the day of battle. The defection of Sir R. Peel from the principles of the party which placed him in power, while still retaining that power, is therefore a dereliction of duty which honour must ever lament, and will never imitate.*

* The danger of the course on which he was adventuring was clearly explained to Sir R. Peel by Mr Goulburn. "The more," said he, "I reflect upon the observations which you made to me a few days since as to your difficulty in again defending a corn-law in Parliament, the more do I feel alarmed at the consequences of your taking a different course from that which you formerly adopted. An abandonment of your former opinions would, I think, now *prejudice your and our characters as public men*, and would be fraught with fatal results to the country's best interests; and as I probably hear many opinions on a subject of this kind which do not reach you, the view which I take of probable consequences may not be undeserving of your consideration. When the public feel, as I believe they do, great doubts as to the existence of an adequate necessity, when greater doubts still are entertained as to the applicability of an abandonment of the corn-law as a remedy for our present distress, the people will, I fear, tax us with treachery and deception, and charge us from our former language with having always had it in contemplation." I view with still greater alarm the effects of the proposed change upon the public interests. In my opinion, the party of which you are the head is the only barrier against the revolutionary effects of the Reform Bill. So long as that party remains unbroken, whether in or out of power, it has the means of doing much good, at least of preventing much evil. But if it be broken in pieces by a destruction of confidence in its leaders (and I cannot but think a dest-

58. But though justice must condemn Sir R. Peel's conduct in retaining office while he changed his principles, yet even here certain alleviating circumstances require to be taken into consideration. It was his fate to be called to direct the councils of his country at the critical time when its growth had terminated, when it had arrived at full maturity, and the causes of decline were beginning to operate. When the obstructing causes were to come into full play, was a mere question of time; no human power could permanently prevent their action any more than it could the silent change of summer into autumn. Sir R. Peel may have accelerated by a

tion of the Corn Laws would produce that result), I see nothing before us but the exasperation of class animosities, a struggle for pre-eminence, and the ultimate triumph of unrestrained democracy."—MR GOULBURN to SIR R. PEEL, Nov. 30, 1845; *Peel's Memoirs*, ii. 201, 203.

few years the adoption of free-trade principles by old and opulent England, but he did nothing more. Soon or later they will always be embraced by a rich and aged community, in consequence of the action of the law provided by nature to arrest its growth. The cry "*Panem et Circenses*" has been heard in other realms than those of Imperial Rome: it is at bottom the same cry as that of cheap bread which convulsed Great Britain in these times. And without altogether exculpating the statesmen who were instrumental in giving to that cry the command of the State, it is but justice to them to recollect that the change, at least at no distant period, had been rendered necessary by general causes, and that its adoption was one of the great means provided by Nature for checking the growth of worn-out communities, and securing the extension and dispersion of mankind.

END OF THE SIXTH VOLUME.

